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HASTIE LECTURES, 1914

# Puritanism in the Scottish Church

# PURITANISM

IN THE

# SCOTTISH CHURCH

HASTIE LECTURES IN THE
UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

BY

W. S. PROVAND, M.A.

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TO THE MEMORY OF

DIXON PROVAND

Second Lieutenant, 19th London Regiment

WHO FELL IN THE GREAT WAR

15th September, 1916

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# PREFACE

The chapters which make up this little volume reproduce, substantially as they were delivered, a course of lectures given on the Hastie Foundation in the University of Glasgow in the spring of 1914. The delay in publication is due to several causes; partly to other engagements which interfered with revision for the press, partly to the War which turned interest in other directions, and partly also to reluctance on the writer's part to submit so slight a production to a discriminating public. If the verdict of the reader should be that the matter is hardly worthy of print, the writer would urge as his defence that the terms of appointment to the Lectures did require that the Lectures be published.

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# INTRODUCTORY

# INTRODUCTORY

THE Church which came into being in England at the Reformation, took the shape it did, not because those who gave it that shape wished to enshrine in it a system of dogmatic theology which they regarded as the whole truth of God, and an order of worship and government which they held to be divinely appointed, but with an aim which was at once less ambitious and more practical. The aim[1] was to provide for the nation and people of England, a Church drawn on so widely inclusive lines, that all reasonable persons in the realm, whether inclining to the old faith or the new, might be able to accept it as affording, if not the complete satisfaction of their desires, at least an

[1] In the Savoy Conference, held in 1661, to consider what alterations should be made in the Prayer-book to meet Puritan views, the spokesman for the bishops said, "It was the wisdom of our reformers to draw up such a Liturgy as neither Romanist nor Protestant could except against."

accommodation which should be tolerable. The Church was, in fact, offered as a compromise; or if that word is too conscienceless to be used in this connection, then we may use another word which sounds better though it means the same thing, and call it an *eirenicon*. It is this purpose which explains the looseness of the formularies of the Church of England, and those apparent inconsistencies in its teaching, which have been the subject of so much animadversion; it explains also why that Church has always felt Dissent to be so particularly galling, since Dissent in its degree is the measure of the Church's failure to achieve its uniting and embracing purpose; and finally, it explains the rejection of the term Protestant[2] by representative Anglicanism, a

[2] *Protestants* were first so called from the document framed by a number of territorial and civil magnates in April, 1529, consequent upon the repeal of the Edict of Spires—a conciliatory measure agreed to in 1526. Of the two terms, *Protestant* and *Reformed*, the latter is the stronger, as marking the point at which negative protest on certain specified matters has passed into positive substitution; accordingly, on the Continent, the Lutheran was the Protestant, and the Swiss the Reformed, Church.

rejection which, though it has given pain to many within and outside that communion, is none the less perfectly consistent with, and flows logically from, the genesis and tradition of the Church. In this connection it may be observed that while the term Protestant stands for much that is excellent and most likely to be enduring in religion, the name itself is not the happiest that could have been chosen; for while it expresses adequately and accurately the intention of the Reformers, it is, as a permanent title, too negative, too suggestive of the kind of religion which in the words of a distinguished divine,[3] "consists in the emphatic, reiterated, boisterous, rejection of the religion of somebody else."

In pursuance of this eirenic design Queen Elizabeth and her statesmen were careful to temper reforming zeal with a very large admixture of discretion. The most obvious corruptions of Mediævalism were purged away;

[3] H. P. Liddon, D.D., in *University Sermons*.

Latin, the use of which in the services had invested them with a magical air, so leading inevitably to superstition, was replaced by English as being "understanded" of the people. The ritual was pruned of its redundancies, but there was nothing savouring of iconoclasm; change for its own sake or for the sake of protest was resisted, even the Popish vestments[4] being retained, with the evident object of making alterations as inconspicuous as possible. The one point upon which there was no compromise was in the matter of the Papal claims to jurisdiction and authority in England; these claims were absolutely repudiated, partly because they accorded ill with Tudor absolutism, and partly because of the deepening sense of nationality in the English people, which made them more and more impatient of foreign interference in their domestic affairs. It is noteworthy that in the

[4] Bishop, afterwards Archbishop Sandys, writing to Peter Martyr, "only the Popish vestments remain in our Church—I mean the copes."

Dedication to the *Most High and Mighty Prince James*, which stands at the beginning of our Bible, the one really controversial stroke is in the reference to the Pope as "that Man of Sin."

That there was a large body of the English people, who, accepted the Church thus offered on its own terms, and abiding loyally by the conditions came in time to prize and love their Church for its own sake, admits of no doubt. These formed what may be called the centre party, but from the first there were attached to this centre two wings consisting on the one hand of the Romanizers, who laboured to undo what the Reformers had accomplished, and on the other hand, of those who were desirous to see reform pushed further, both in respect of doctrine[5] and of ceremonies. From time to

[5] Especially with regard to the Prayer-book, in which the Puritans wished to see the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination more clearly expressed. The supplication "that all men might be saved" was strongly denounced from the Puritan side. For concessions offered, see record of Savoy Conferences. Neal, in his *History of the Puritans*, distinguishes between Puritans in respect of ceremonies and Puritans in respect of doctrine, but the distinction soon faded out, and the two parties became one.

time, sections belonging to the last named party, finding the accomplishment of their aim to be impossible, or too long delayed, hived off and formed congregations of their own. Those who thus seceded were known as Separatists, the name Puritan being applied to those who, though dissatisfied with what they deemed the inadequateness of the reform, still remained within the Church's pale. The Separatists were Puritans, but the Puritans were not necessarily Separatists; they were in the first instance non-conformists within the Church. If they were clergy, they refrained from celebrating the obnoxious ceremonies and preaching the obnoxious doctrines; if they were lay, they sought the ministrations of clergy of their own views. Considerable latitude was allowed. James indeed, wished to harry the Puritans out of the Church, but was over-ruled by more moderate advisers, and it was not until 1662, in the reign of Charles II. that an Act of

Uniformity was passed, requiring conformity with the received ceremonies on pain of expulsion from the Church. This Act of Uniformity has been much criticised, but there is something to be said on both sides of the question. It seems both desirable and right that in a great public institution such as a National Church, personal and local predilections should be subordinated to the generally accepted rule. On the other hand, it is possible that by patience and forbearance, coupled with reasonable concessions, the differences might in time have been healed, and the Church saved from the loss of valuable elements which the expulsion of non-conformists entailed. It should not be forgotten, however, that the Puritans had themselves set the bad example, for in the brief day of their power, they ruthlessly extruded from the Church all who did not accept their views. The name Puritan thus bestowed, though it came to be accepted

and even gloried in by those to whom it was applied, was on the lips of those who coined or re-issued the term a word of reproach. It stood for a captious fault-finding temper prone to take offence, for scrupulosity pushed to absurd lengths, for the investing of trifles with importance, for pharisaism[6] and hypocrisy,

[6] A hymn which used to be sung in Congregational churches is as follows:—

We are a garden walled around,
Chosen and made peculiar ground;
A little spot enclosed by grace
Out of the world's wide wilderness.

Like trees of myrrh and spice we stand,
Planted by God the father's hand,
And all his springs in Zion flow
To make the young plantations grow.

Awake, O Heavenly wind, and come,
Blow on this Garden of perfume;
Spirit Divine, descend and breathe
A gracious gale on plants beneath.

Make our best spices flow abroad
To entertain our Saviour God;
And faith and love and joy appear,
And every grace be active here.

The good sense of Congregationalism long ago discarded the hymn. Dr. M'Kennal (*English Congregationalism*), p. 153, regrets its disuse, seeming to think the sentiment admirable; but surely it breathes the very spirit of pharisaism.

for sanctimoniousness and cant. The characterisation was unjust. Evil clings to all our good, and the best achievements of the human spirit are touched with infirmity. In the later development of Puritanism, absurdity and pharisaism are evident enough; but on the whole, Puritanism was marked by a seriousness and elevation most admirable, and the era which it dominated is a noble interlude in the history-drama of England. Its condemnation lies in the fact that by its austerity and gloom, and by its repression of healthy human instincts, it provoked the profligate reaction of Restoration times, when virtue was derided and vice glorified in literature and on the stage of every theatre. The poems of the Earl of Rochester and many of the plays of that time are a sufficient commentary on the character of a society which produced and applauded them.

It is this Puritanism in its strength and in its weakness as it manifested itself in Scotland

that we are to investigate. In the Northern Kingdom, it followed another line of development than that followed in England, and arrived at somewhat different results, the differences being due to the special national temperament and the special influences at work; but the differences, though important, are after all only variations upon one type, substantial identity underlies them.

The path of investigation is perilous; it is thorny; it is strewn with the ashes of long past controversies, which yet when stirred develop heat as well as smoke; the air of it is potent, like Circe's wine, so that the traveller who breathes it is strangely changed. That the earlier historians should have failed in impartiality is not to be wondered at. Row and Calderwood, Spottiswood and James Melville, Shields and Turner, Burnet and Balfour, and Curate Calder, were too much concerned in the disputes which they describe, to be other than partisans.

The same excuse can be pleaded for Dr. M'Crie, for in his time the old questions had risen from their grave, and were to be fought out again. But that moderns, far removed from the heat and dust of battle, should also, when they write upon this subject, become partizans is disappointing. Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. J. H. Millar do less than justice to the Covenanting Puritans; on the other side, Dr. Smellie, in his "Men of the Covenant," does them more than justice. The gifted author of that work says in his Preface that "the Covenanters in the main were incontestably right." The statement is strong, but the qualification is important. Unfortunately, in the body of the book the qualification seems to be entirely dropped, and the Covenanters are represented as exemplars of every virtue. If one side was incontestably right, then the other side must have been incontestably wrong; but this is not how right and wrong are apportioned in the quarrels of men. It is much safer

to begin our investigation with the assumption, and proceed on it until it is proved false, that rightness and wrongness, truth and error, were divided in some fairer proportions between the parties whose strife we are to make the subject of our study.

# CHAPTER I

# THE CHURCH OF KNOX

## CHAPTER I

# THE CHURCH OF KNOX

For our purpose Puritanism may be taken as beginning with the Reformation. It is, as we shall see, far older than that, but in the Reformation the movement had at least its proximate source, as in it the earlier streams gathered themselves up for a new start.

As Martin Luther read his Bible he saw that in the course of centuries there had accumulated upon the doctrine and worship of the Christian Church a mass of errors and additions which called for removal. When he entered upon the path which was to lead him so far, nothing was further from his thoughts than that he should break with the Church in which he had been ordained a priest. He even expected that in his reforming efforts he

would have the sympathy and support of the ecclesiastical authorities. Thus, in the Preface to his collected works, written not long before his death, he says that at the outset he had come to count confidently on having the Pope for his patron.[1] But when these hopes were disappointed, and the ecclesiastical authorities, instead of welcoming and aiding the reforming movement, showed themselves to be its implacable enemies, then the sentiments and attitude of the Reformers underwent a progressive change. The protest originally directed against the errors of the Church became more and more a protest against the Church itself, and the negative element, implicit in the movement from the first, tended to be exalted to the place of a positive standard and rule.

Thus it was that "good" bishop Robert Hall could say that in his day there were many who measured their distance from Heaven by their distance from Rome. Swift, in his *Tale of a Tub*, elaborates the bishop's

[1] *Certus mihi videbar me habiturum patronum papam.*

thesis. In the *Tale* the great satirist allegorises the story of the Reformation. A father on his death-bed calls to him his three sons, and gives each of them a coat, the garments being similar in all respects, and tells them that by attending to the instructions in his will, the coats will last them all their lives. The coat is the Gospel, the will is the New Testament, and the three sons, whose names are Peter, Martin, and Jack, are the Roman, Lutheran, and Calvinistic Churches. At first, all three brothers take to altering their coats according to the fashion; but a quarrel falling out between them, Martin and Jack are turned out of the house, but not before they have contrived to make a copy of their father's will, which Peter had kept jealously locked up—a reference to the refusal of the Roman Catholic Church to allow the Bible to be translated into the vernacular. On reading over the will the two brothers see how far they have transgressed their father's instructions, and set about removing the decorations which they had added to the coats,

and restoring them to the condition in which they had received them. Martin proceeds in this with the greatest caution, taking care not to injure the fabric, and rather allowing ornaments which ought not to be there to remain, than damage the coat itself.

Jack goes about the business in a different spirit. "For the memories of lord Peter's injuries had bred a degree of hatred and spite which had a much greater share in inciting him than any regards after his father's commands; since these appeared only secondary and subservient to the other. Ah! good brother Martin (said he), do as I do for the love of God; strip, tear, pull, rend, flay off all, that we may appear as unlike that rogue Peter as it is possible; I would not for a hundred pounds carry the least mark about me which might give occasion to the neighbours for suspecting that I was related to such a rascal." Thus "kindled and inflamed," he tore off the embroidery, and with it great pieces of the coat itself.

That a feeling of this kind did operate

in producing ultra-protestant puritanism can hardly be denied. To the thoroughgoing Reformers of Knox's time in Scotland, the Church of Rome with all its works was anathema. To it they applied the curses of both the Old and New Testaments; it was the race of Canaanites with whom the congregation of Jesus Christ was to fight till they should desist from their "oppin idolatrie." To it they applied without hesitation language taken from the Apocalypse, which we now recognize to have been directed against the Roman Pagan Empire. It was "Belial," "Antichrist," "The Roman Beast," "That odious beast"; and they asked, What concord hath light with darkness?[2]

Now when people have got this length, it is evident that they are not far from the point where the negative protest passes into the positive rule, and it becomes a virtue to be as unlike the abominable thing as it is possible to be.

[2] See Letter of Assembly of 1566 to the Bishops of England, in *Book of Universall Kirke*, 6.

Swift's *Tale* gives us another clue. It may seem at first sight an anachronism that he makes Peter, Martin, and Jack to be all of the same age; "born at one birth" is his phrase. Nevertheless the analogy is sound. We shall misconceive entirely the nature of the Reformation if we think of it as consisting in a series of events transpiring in the sixteenth century, or as a process with a clearly defined beginning and end. What we call the Reformation was but the emergence into full activity of a movement which had existed in the Church from its foundation, and which had at recurrent periods its special manifestations. We may say indeed that the forces which produced the Mediævalist on the one hand, and the Puritan on the other, are inherent in human nature itself, and therefore as old as humanity. For there are in the human spirit two conflicting tendencies, the one making for simplicity and the other for elaboration. These correspond to the temperaments distinguished by Matthew Arnold as the Hebraistic and Hellenistic, and produce in every sphere their appropriate

results, determining by the proportion in which they co-exist the character of the productions of an age or an individual. In Art they produce respectively the severe and the florid, and equally in Philosophy, Politics, and Religion they show their power; what we call Church History is largely the record of the conflict between those two tendencies.

Now while it may be doubted whether the Celtic Scottish Church was the altogether beautiful thing that it is sometimes represented, there being in fact no adequate historical material for arriving at a verdict, there can be no doubt that the submersion of Scottish Christianity by mediævalism—a submersion which lasted for four centuries,—was the triumph of forces which were hostile to simplicity. The very completeness of this triumph, and the excesses which it begot, provoked reaction and revolt. A notable instance of such revolt is found in the remarkable movement associated with the Lollards of Kyle, who in the fifteenth century, and before Luther was born, formulated a series of

Articles[3] which anticipate, and in some respects go far beyond the ripest conclusions of the Saxon Reformer.

None the less is it true that the successful vindication of his principles by Luther gave a mighty impulse to the reforming movement in Scotland, and was indeed its parent. As early as 1525, the Scottish Parliament at the instance of the Church denounced penalties against those who should introduce the new doctrines

[3] The Articles were these:—(1) That images ought not to be made or worshipped; (2) that the relics of saints ought not to be adored; (3) that it is not lawful to fight for the faith; (4) that Christ gave the power of binding and loosing to Peter only and not to his successors; (5) that Christ ordained no priest to consecrate; (6) that after the consecration in the Mass there remains bread, and the natural Body of Christ is not there; (7) that tithes ought not to be paid to Ecclesiastical persons; (8) that Christ at His coming did not abrogate the power of secular princes; (9) that every faithful man and woman is a priest; (10) that the unction of kings ceased at the coming of Christ; (11) that the Pope is not the successor of Peter except in that in which our Saviour spake to him when he said, Get behind me Satan; (12) that the Pope deceiveth the people with his Bulls and Indulgences; (13) that the Mass profiteth not the souls that are in Purgatory; (14) that the bishop's blessing is of no value; (15) that Indulgences should not be granted to fight against the Saracens; (16) that the Pope exalts himself above God and against God; (17) that the Pope cannot remit the pains of Purgatory; (18) that the excommunication of the Church is not to be feared; (19) that in no case is it lawful to swear; (20) that priests may have wives. Spottiswood, *History*, I., pp. 120, 121 (Ed. 1850); *Cf.* Knox, *Reformation.*

from abroad, and in 1527 that legislation was strengthened and extended. In 1528 Patrick Hamilton was burned at the stake for heresy, and in 1535 a rigorous Act was passed against those who should "hold, dispute, or rehearse the damnable doctrines of the great heretic Luther." But neither threats nor persecution availed to stem the rising tide of reform; the old order was doomed, it had outlived its usefulness and its vigour; the times were ripe for revolutionary change, and all that was wanting to ensure success was a competent leader. In Knox, such a leader was found. Landing in Scotland in 1559, after a prolonged absence, he threw himself with such vigour into the fray, that in little more than a year the Reformed Confession was ratified by the Estates, and Protestantism became the national religion of Scotland. That such a result should have been so speedily achieved shows the ripeness of the times for change.

We can distinguish three causes as contributing to this striking triumph, and all of them connected with the clergy. Their

flagitious[4] lives had shocked the conscience of an age that was not over-fastidious. Again, the exactions of the clergy in tithes, dues, and dispensations had alienated those whom they oppressed. Regarding them Row of Carnock has the caustic comment: "the Pope of Rome has ever one hand in your conscience and the other in your purse." Thirdly, the wealth of the clergy excited the cupidity of nobles who were as needy as they were ambitious. The importance of this last cause can hardly be over-estimated, and it is in reference to it that Buckle describes the Scottish Reformation as being aristocratic. In its result it was democratic, but it was brought about by the agency of the nobility. Nor could it be other-

[4] Sir David Lindsay had the patronage of James V. in the production of plays in which the vices of Churchmen were held up to public obloquy. John Major, Provost of St. Salvator's College in 1520, also inveighed against their usurpations and corruptions. The *Complaint of the Halt, Blinde, and Poore against the Priests*, was apparently circulated in Scotland. Knox in his history includes an address from "*The Blinde, Crooked, Bedralis, Widowis, Orphelingis, and all other Poore, etc., to the floquis of Friaris within Realme.*" Sir James Melville, of Halhill, records some very plain speaking from James V. to the clergy (*Memoirs* p. 26, Ed. 1751) this, though according to the same authority the monarch's own life was loose.

wise; democracy, as we know it, was non-existent in Scotland, the country was in the grip of feudalism, and men took their religion, as they took their politics, from their chiefs. The nobles who organised themselves under the title of Lords of the Congregation,[5] were not saints, but men actuated by the ordinary motives of humanity. Personal and political considerations had a large share in determining their conduct. Romanism was identified with the French alliance and the strengthening of the royal authority against their own, while Protestantism promised the weakening of that alliance, with the consequent weakening of the royal power; it promised also the breaking-up of the wealthy ancient Church, from the re-distribution of the revenues of which the nobility might expect to benefit.

Knox has been blamed for making use of such allies; he has been accused of enlisting

[5] A band was signed in Edinburgh in 1557, in which the "professors" took up the name of *Congregation*, renouncing "the congregation of Satan with all the superstitious abomination and idolatry thereof." This congregation used the English Prayer-book until the Geneva Liturgy of John Knox displaced it.

every species of jealousy and disaffection for the accomplishment of his aims; but John Knox had little choice. He was engaged in an enterprise the success of which he rightly considered to be essential to the well-being of his country, and to have refused the help of all whose motives were not as pure as his own would have been to make the same mistake which the Presbyterian Puritans of about a century later made, and would have entailed equally disastrous results. Besides, it is to be remembered that the Reformation at which Knox aimed was social and political as well as religious, and he might well feel himself free to co-operate with those whose political sentiments at least he shared. That many of his co-adjutors were selfish and greedy robbers is clear enough now; but Knox could hardly be expected to judge them in the light of what were to him future events. To the plunder of the Church Knox was no consenting party; he did his best to save the patrimony of the Kirk for the pious uses to which it had been dedicated. His own declaration, and those of

the early Assemblies, leave no room for doubt on this point.

The Church thus called into being bore the impress of its creator's genius, and as Knox was largely under the influence of Calvin, it took a Genevan[6] character.

In doctrine it was Calvinistic, but free from Zwinglianism;[7] the sobriety and elevation of its view of the Sacrament has been commended by Anglican historians.

Discipline was stern. Church censures culminating in excommunication, which latter

[6] On this point Row says: "The ministers that were took not their pattren from any Kirk nor from Geneva itself; but laying God's word before them made Reformation according therewith both in doctrine first and then in discipline, when and as they might get it overtaken." Elsewhere he says: "Many things must be tolerated for a time in the infancie of a Kirk which may not be authorized when the Kirk comes to a greater perfection—many things *in Ecclesia constituenda* which are not to be tolerated *in Ecclesia constituta.*" *Hist.* pp. 23-27.

[7] After repudiating Transubstantiation the Formulary proceeds:—"And yit notwithstanding the far distance which is betwix His Body now glorified in Heavin and us now mortall in this earth, yet we most assuredlie believe that the Bread that we break is the Communion of Christis Body and the cup which we bless is the Communion of His Blood. So that we confess and believe that the faithfull in the richt use of the Lordis table so do eatt the Body and drynk the Bloode of the Lord Jesus that he remaineth in thame and thai in Him."

became so terrible an engine of oppression, were provided and freely used. Not only was the person excommunicated debarred from the privileges of the Church, he was made a social outcast; save his own wife and family, none might have converse or dealings with him under pain of incurring like censure. The civil power was urged and expected to take cognisance of ecclesiastical offences. The Assembly of 1564 supplicated, That sins of all sorts be punished civilly by mulcts and corporal pains, the transgressors of Christ's ordinances and open contemners, especially in Aberdeen, be condignly punished. The Assembly of 1565 supplicated the Queen that preachings be repaired unto by all on the Lord's day. The Assembly of 1566 supplicated the Privy Council, that no excommunicated person have *personam standi in judicio.* Rank and position were no protection, Church censures came upon poor and rich alike.[8]

[8] "That there be no partialitie in discipline and censure, great men, nobles and barons, offending in those things whilk deserve sackcloth, shall take on that same habit whilk the poore take on, and no pecuniall somme—*etiamsi ad pios usus.*" Evidently the practice had crept in and was become a scandal.

Restoration could only be obtained through the most humiliating ordeals,[9] the penitent having to appear in church barefooted and bareheaded, and be made a text of by the minister. The genuineness of the numerous repentances is always open to doubt on account of the crushing social and civil penalties attaching to Ecclesiastical censure. A censorship of the press was set up, the Assembly of 1563 ordaining that nothing relating to religion or reformation be printed till first approven by the superintendent.

The freedom with which Church censures were applied soon affected the attendance at General Assemblies, the nobility and gentry "dishaunting" the supreme Court of the Church,

[9] See case of Paul Methven, who, having been excommunicated for a grievous lapse, was restored "upon his serious supplication and great expressions of sorrow, and released thus: two severall Sabbath dayes in Edinburgh, Dundie, and Jedburgh, both dayes in sackcloth, standing before sermon at the church door barefooted and bareheaded, and the last of the two, when he is absolved and released, layes aside that habite, and is embraced in his own habite, yit not to be admitted to the Lord's Table whill he report to the nixt General Assembly in December sufficient testimoniall of his repentance publict, and also of his private Christian cariage." *Booke of Universall Kirke*, Ass. 1566. But in our own day he never would have been restored at all.

which led to remonstrances being addressed to the Regent and Council. Row is enthusiastic as to the effect of this discipline. "All corruptions knowen to be in the Ministrie and also vyces among the common people were daylie taken order with; for the Kirk was strictlie and well governed by Kirk Sessions in every particular congregation."

Ministers were well looked after, being warned to be careful in walk and conversation, avoiding levity in "communications at tables," and "light clothing," either for themselves or their families. The Church claimed jurisdiction in matrimonial causes, and in 1574 affirmed the Divine right of Assemblies.

The worship of the Church was plain, but not so bare as it afterwards became. Shields[10] says that it was reformed from all dregs of Popery and fopperies of human ceremonies.

A Liturgy (Knox's Book of Common Order) was in use. Opponents of liturgies have affirmed that all that was done was to provide forms which the less instructed class of

[10] *A Hind let Loose*, p. 19.

"Readers" might use, and which might serve as models to be kept in view by ministers in the conduct of divine service. There is, however, nothing upon which a sure conclusion can be founded. *The Book of Discipline*[11] is not very clear on the point as to whether the Liturgy was optional. It declares Common Prayer to be one of the necessary things; on the other hand, it indicates that conceived (*i.e.*, free) Prayer was also a regular feature. There was no fixed lectionary, but Scripture was to be read according to some consecutive plan. The praise consisted of the singing of the Psalms in Buchanan's metrical version. Musical culture seems to have been at a very low ebb, for it is provided that the Psalms are to be sung "when possible."

But more important than either doctrine or

[11] One absolutely necessary thing is that the Word may be truly preached, the Sacraments rightly administered, Common Prayer publicly made . . . In great towns we think it expedient that there be either Sermon or Common Prayer; the day of Public Sermon we do not think the Common Prayer needful to be used, lest we should foster the people in superstition, who come to the Prayers as they come to the Mass, or give them occasion to think that these are not Prayers which are conceived before or after the Sermon.

discipline, so far as the subject of these chapters is concerned, was the matter of Church government, inasmuch as from the questions concerning it flowed in large measure the later puritanical developments. Regarding these developments, Buckle, who explains everything by reference to general laws, makes the following observation. He says that all the Reformation did was to shatter the particular mould in which popular superstition was cast, without in any way destroying superstition itself, with the result that it straightway poured itself into another mould. The observation is just. For most men, for all except the few, religious forms are essential[12] if religion is to be retained, and to these forms some degree of sanctity is necessarily attached; where the sanctity attached is excessive we have superstition. What fell out then in the Reformation was simply a change of the objects of superstitious veneration. For the superstition of an infallible Church there was set up the super-

[12] See Preface to English Prayer-book, where the necessity of ceremonial affirmed.

stition of an infallible book—the Bible, which was held to be of equal authority in all its parts and to cover every detail and provide for all contingencies—like the pattern of the Tabernacle shown to Moses in the mount, with all the details of the curtains, knops, and fringes, to be scrupulously followed. For the superstition of Pasch and Yule[13] was set up the superstition of the Sabbath and the ecclesiastically appointed Fast. For the idolatrous adoration of the Mass there was set up ultimately the idolatrous terror of the Sacrament; for if it is superstition which crowds the Catholic church at Mass with eager participants, it is no less superstition which prevents all but a small percentage of the Highland congregations from honouring the Lord's Table. Both adopt the *opus operatum* theory, the only difference being that in the case of the Catholic the *opus* is regarded as salutary, and in the case of the ultra-Protestant as damnatory. So vain was the aim of the

[13] It is significant that the Assembly was indicted to meet on 25th December in the years 1562-66 inclusive.

Reformer, as declared in the third head of the Book of Policy, which was "the abolishing of all idolatry," and so true the old saying, *Naturam expellitis furca tamen usque recurret.*

Buckle's observation is therefore both true and important to be borne in mind. The Reformation had destroyed the ancient edifice in which superstition had found a home, but superstition was not minded to remain homeless, and immediately set about building a new house for itself. The question which we are trying to answer is, Why did it build in Scotland the particular house which it did build? In other words, What was the reason for the puritanical developments which attended the Scottish Reformation? The answer to that question is to be found not in one direction only, but in several. This at least seems clear, that the opposition and strife which gathered round the outward organisation of the Church—that is to say, its government—must be held as having contributed largely to the result arrived at.

The ancient Church was destroyed in the

revolution of 1560, yet not so completely but that part of its framework remained and was incorporated in the new Church. The monastic prelates, titulars of abbeys—priors and abbots—were continued in the enjoyment of their revenues, subject to certain deductions, and as constituting, along with the bishops, the third Estate, they retained their seats in Parliament and in the College of Justice, but they exercised no function in the Church in respect of their dignities, and became, in fact, temporal lords.

With regard to the bishops it was different. They continued to enjoy their temporal and political privileges, retaining their seats in the legislature and judiciary and drawing the bulk of their old revenues; in addition, they retained their place in the Church, exercising jurisdiction and patronage. Their position was, however, materially weakened. A new order of Superintendents was appointed, to whom bounds or dioceses were assigned in which they exercised episcopal authority, visiting and planting churches, giving "collation," and

affixing censures. They lacked the episcopal essential of consecration, being simply appointed to their office without any special form of orders.

Side by side with this quasi-episcopal organisation, there was set up a system of presbyterian courts, the Session, the Synod, and the National Assembly; Presbyteries were not erected until a later date. The National Assembly (which came to be called the General Assembly) was supreme; to it the Superintendents had to report at each meeting concerning their "travel," and were approved, censured, or removed, as was thought fit. Bishops were subject to deposition [14] or excommunication by the same Court. Even in the provincial Assembly or Synod, which was the old Diocesan Council, the bishops were not necessarily Moderators. Such was the first polity, and it is idle to ask whether it was

[14] The Bishop of Orkney was removed from all function in the Ministry for celebrating the marriage of the Queen to Bothwell; he was restored the following year, but ordered to "make sermon in Holyroodhouse, and after sermon to publicly confess his fault." 1566.

episcopal or presbyterian. We might as well argue as to whether the chess-board is white or black; it is both, which is to say it is neither. It was hardly episcopacy where the bishops had to give account every year, or twice a year, to a popular Assembly. On the other hand, that parity which is supposed (not always truly) to be the note of presbytery was entirely wanting. There was no kind of parity between the minister and the Superintendent who might remove him at any moment from his position. Nor are we concerned as to whether the Superintendent was meant to be a mere temporary [15] expedient to meet passing needs, and to be abolished as soon as the organisation of the Church could be completed. The important thing is that such an organisation, whether intended to be

[15] Row holds that it was purely a temporary measure: "the General Assembly even at the beginning lyked not the name of Bishop as savouring of some superioritie, which they thought should not be in the persone of any one man in God's Church and among the Ministers thereof." *History*, p. 21.

The first Book of Discipline says: "because it is found expedient for the erection and cleansing of Churches and appointing of Ministers that at this time there be selected ten or twelve Superintendents."

temporary or permanent, and whether deserving to be called a modified episcopacy or a modified presbytery, was in fact the organisation of the Church, for it gave rise to questions which had the most far-reaching consequences. The danger of friction in such a system is evident. Human nature being what it is, the bishops would endeavour to regain their lost powers[16] and dignities,[17] while the Assembly would seek to establish and extend its authority, and to depress still further all who might be regarded as rivals.

Only one or other of two things could prevent contention and division, self-abnegation in one or both parties—a virtue which ecclesiastics have seldom shown, and did not

[16] "The Kirk being in the first infancie and growing thereof, behooved to have out of their small number some thought meetest to be visitors. Thir visitors, some had been bishops before, and some had become preachers of the gospel. Others were ordinaire pastors, but because this office of visitation of the Kirk was enjoined to them, they were named Superintendents. Name of a bishop Superintendent or Pastor be all one."

[17] Bishops were forbidden to use the title Reverend Father in God as being unscriptural. Yet in more than one place Paul calls Timothy his son, so that conversely we may suppose Timothy would call Paul his father.

show here; or pressure exerted from without, compelling a coalition from considerations of safety. Such external pressure was supplied by the menace of a possible Roman revival. The Reformation had been accomplished by a politico-ecclesiastical coup. The young Queen was a Catholic, and had brought with her from France a bishop and a priest, while Mass was regularly celebrated for her at Holyrood. Some of the nobles were open advocates of the old faith, others were suspected of a secret attachment to it, and a large section of the population sighed for the old solemnities and festivities and felt as if religion had perished with them. Eloquent testimony to the reality of the danger is borne by the records of the early Assemblies, which year after year transmitted petitions, supplications, "regraitings," in order to stir up the Privy Council to "take order with the open enemies of the true religion," "sayers and hearers of Mass, pilgrimagers," etc.

It was the same fear which prompted the

ruthless destruction[18] of churches and abbeys as monuments of idolatry and encouragements to idolators. "Doun with the crows' nests," said Knox, "else the crows will bigg in them againe."

So long as this danger threatened, the fear of it operated to restrain, even though it could not wholly prevent, internal dissensions; but when the peril passed, as it did for the time under the stern repression of the Regent Morton, the coalition broke up into its opposing factions. So acute did the division become, and so seriously did it threaten the peace of the Church and the nation that, in 1572, Morton exerted himself to induce the parties to come to a truce, with the result that a *modus*

[18] There were two distinct campaigns with this end, the first in 1559, the lawless vandalism of the "Rascal Multitude," the second in 1570, legally authorized and systematically carried out. "No difference was made, but all the churches either defaced or pulled to the ground. The holy vessels and whatever men could make a gain of as timber, lead, and bells, were put to sale. The very sepulchres of the dead were not spared." Spottiswood's *History*, p. 175. See also Row's *History*, p. 12, where the demolishing of "needless kirks and idolatrous, prophane, and sumptuous buildings," is given as a proof that the Reformation passed onward daylie." Row admits excesses.

*vivendi* was arrived at in the Convention[19] of Leith, which marked a distinct episcopal gain, though some safeguards were provided against abuses. This agreement came up before the two succeeding Assemblies for consideration, and finally was confirmed, subject to certain protestations against the prelatic titles employed, and on the understanding that it was to be *ad interim*, that is, until the young king should attain his majority.

That this agreement would for any length of

[19] The Articles agreed on were: (1) that the archbishoprics and bishoprics presently void should be disponed to the most qualified of the ministers; (2) that the spiritual jurisdiction should be exercised by the bishops in their dioceses; (3) that all abbots, priors, and other inferior prelates who should happen to be presented to benefices should be tried by the bishop or superintendent of the bounds concerning their qualifications and aptness to give voice for the Church in Parliament, and upon their collation be admitted to the benefices and not otherwise; (4) that to the bishoprics presently void or that should happen to fall the King and Regent should recommend fit and qualified persons, their election to be made by the chapters of cathedral churches; (5) that all benefices of cures and prelacies should be disponed to actual ministers and to no others; (6) that the ministers should receive ordination from the bishop of the diocese, and where no bishop was yet placed, from the superintendent of the bounds; (7) that the bishops and superintendents at the ordination of ministers should exact of them an oath for acknowledging his Majesty's authority and for obedience to the Ordinary in all things lawful.

time have preserved the peace between the two factions, neither of which it satisfied, is in the highest degree improbable. A speedy end was put to it, even as a temporary truce, by the entrance on the stage of a new figure who was to precipitate that long and embittered controversy which in the end produced profound changes in the Scottish Church.

# CHAPTER II

# THE CHURCH OF MELVILLE

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For the first fifteen years of its history (1560-1575) the Church of Scotland was the Church of John Knox. It retained the character which his genius had given to it in the beginning. It was strongly and even violently anti-papal, but in this respect, and in respect of doctrine generally, all within its borders were at one. Archbishop Spottiswood was as firm for the "truth," "the evangel," and against that "man of sin," the Pope, as were the stoutest Presbyterians. It was in respect of government that the line of cleavage developed. As has been seen, the Church as it came from the hand of Knox had a composite government, as if the Reformer had aimed at taking what was best in presbyterianism and in episcopacy and combining them in the new Church. The trouble was that the two

elements were not combined and showed no tendency to combine, but became more discordant and conflicting as time passed, and each rallied to its banner a party determined to make its principles triumphant. By 1575 the battle against Romanism was as good as won, and the two factions within the Church, no longer threatened from the outside, were at liberty to fight out their differences with one another. Thus began that long-drawn-out struggle, which culminated, after varying fortunes, in what came to be called the Second Reformation, a Reformation which consisted in the expulsion from the Church polity of every vestige of episcopacy and its settlement upon a purely presbyterian model. In this year 1575, accordingly, the Church of Scotland began to cease to be the Church of Knox and to become the Church of Melville. Melville was the true pioneer of the Second Reformation, and he it was who sowed the seed which grew and multiplied into the dismal harvest of ultra-protestant puritanism. He claims our attention.

Andrew Melville was born in 1545 and having finished his student course at St. Andrews, he crossed to France and prosecuted his studies at the Universities of Paris and Poitiers. France was at that time in the throes of the Huguenot troubles and Melville found it, after some time, advisable to seek safer quarters in Geneva which was then the refuge of distressed Protestants. Here he received a warm welcome and almost immediately on his arrival was, after examination, appointed to the chair of Humanity in the University, or, as it was called the Academy, of that city. Calvin was dead, and his place filled by Theodore Beza, who had been Knox's friend and correspondent, and now became Melville's guide and inspirer. So congenial did Melville find the political and religious atmosphere, and so firm did his friendship become with his Academic colleagues, that he appears to have given up all thought of returning to his native country; he fell out of correspondence with his relatives, who came to the conclusion that he must have perished in the Huguenot disturbances, and

were overjoyed at last to learn that he was alive and in a position of honour. Correspondence with his friends in Scotland followed; the position of ecclesiastical affairs was explained to him and he was urged to return and help the Presbyterian cause. Yielding to these representations, and with the consent of Beza, Melville after an absence of ten years, five of which had been spent at Geneva, returned to Scotland in 1574. After some time spent in retirement with his relatives, he was appointed to the principalship of the University of Glasgow. The wisdom of this choice was speedily justified by the zeal and success with which he devoted himself to the duties of his office. He reorganized the affairs of the University, which from various causes had fallen into disorder, infused new life into the teaching, greatly increased the number of regents and students, and raised the institution of which he was the head to a high degree of efficiency and reputation.

But not for long did Melville suffer his official duties to engross his energies. The

conflict in the Church summoned him as with a trumpet call, and it is as the ecclesiastic rather than as scholar or university administrator that he lives in history. In the Assembly of 1575, John Dury, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, raised the question of the lawfulness of bishops in a reformed Church. Spottiswood's account of the matter is that in doing this Dury was "stirred up" by Melville; and M'Crie,[1] whose partiality knows no bounds,

[1] His *Life of Melville* is a monument of patient industry and learned research, all the more remarkable when we remember that the materials and authorities were then in manuscripts hidden away in libraries; but it merits Buckle's description of it as "undiscriminating panegyric." Yet even in the pages of M'Crie, Melville is hardly a loveable man, and he imported his defects into his system. Melville had little of the sentiment of patriotism and would have been quite content to die in Geneva. "*Patria est ubicunque est bene*," he said on one occasion, a saying which compares unfavourably with Samuel Rutherford's "I had rather be in Scotland with angry Jesus Christ, than in any Eden or garden in the earth.

"Notwithstanding the heat and vehemence displayed in his public conduct, he was an agreeable companion in private. Provided those who were about him could bear with his wholesome and friendly anger, and allow him freely to censure what he thought wrong in their conduct, he assumed no arrogant airs of superiority, exacted no humiliating marks of submission, but lived with them as a brother among brethren." *Life*, p. 342. Ed. 1855. It would have been interesting to know what M'Crie's idea of arrogant airs of superiority was.

after some circumlocution and needless asperity, admits that this was so.

When Dury had finished, Melville rose to second him and in a long speech contended that the office of bishop was unscriptural; in support of his position he cited the authority of Calvin and Beza and the example of Geneva. A committee of six, three from each side, was appointed to consider and report on the matter raised by Dury; of this committee, Melville was one. The report when given in was of a temporising nature, the findings being:—That it was inexpedient to pronounce on the main question as to the lawfulness of bishops; that the name of bishop in the New Testament belonged to all who had the oversight of a flock; that out of these some might be chosen to exercise oversight of their brethren within the precincts. Row interjects, "Understand especiallie *in ecclesia constituenda*," but there is no such qualification in the deliverance. The report was evidently a compromise to secure unanimity in the committee; that it did not represent Melville's view is certain; his views

triumphed when the Assembly[2] of 1578 adopted the Second Book of Discipline, which is his work as decisively as the First Book was the work of Knox. The mere fact that a Second Book was felt to be called for, is proof of the change that had come over the Church, and a comparison of the two reveals the magnitude of the change that had taken place. From a religious point of view such comparison is favourable to the earlier production, which, with all its faults, is instinct with the breath of piety. All through it manifests its author's desire to beget a sense of religion upon the hearts of the Scottish people. The Second Book is more concerned with ecclesiastical machinery and is the work of a lawyer. It begins with the consideration of the relation of the Church to the State, which difficult and delicate problem it solves by predicating two distinct spheres self-contained and mutually exclusive; one, the spiritual domain in which the Church exercises authority and jurisdiction, absolutely and without appeal; the other the

[2] Parliamentary ratification was not got till 1592.

civil, governed by the King and magistrates. Various qualifications are provided to supply a *nexus* between the two jurisdictions. Christ is stated to be the only ruler and governor of the Church ; from Him ecclesiastical authority is derived, and as it is to be according to the Word of God, the magistrate is to see that it is so exercised. But as in regard to the meaning of the Word of God, the Church only can interpret, there is no real concession to the civil power, which is, rather, designated as the instrument of the Church. More substantial is the provision that "the minister teaches the magistrate how it (the civil jurisdiction) should be exercised according to the Word of God."

The fatal objection to the scheme is that it pre-supposes a world which has no reality.[3] No such division as is here predicated does in

[3] The futility of the distinction was clearly shown later. By the treaty of 18th June, 1639, it was stipulated as follows :—"All matters ecclesiastical shall be determined by the Assembly of the Kirk, and matters civil by the Parliament and other inferior judicatories established by law." But conflict immediately arose as to the meaning of the terms.

fact exist. Human life and interests cannot be partitioned off into spiritual and non-spiritual compartments. Questions continually emerge which will not fit into either of the categories provided, inasmuch as they are both spiritual and civil. The conflict of 1843 arose upon the same point. The latest proposal is that the spiritual act shall spiritualise all its consequences, no matter what civil rights and interests may be involved. This view of Church and State put forward by Melville was of course, the Genevan view, and as he was in constant correspondence with Beza, it would have his approval and support. In Geneva Calvin had set up a theocracy; he had himself been appointed to draw up the civil code. He was the deadly enemy of Erastianism and his theory of Church and State was that the Church should command and the State obey.

The sufficient answer is that no sovereign state could ever consent so to abdicate its functions; it may pretend to do so; for political reasons it may allow the Church to imagine that it has got this jurisdiction, but it must

always in the end interpose its authority in respect of the plea, "*Civis Romanus sum.*" Least of all in a superstitious age, such as the sixteenth century was, could the civil authority have conceded this claim unless it had been bent on suicide; for had it been conceded the State would have become the vassal of the General Assembly. Superstition will always aggrandize the Church. The magistrate may fine, imprison, banish, or gibbet; but how insignificant are these things in comparison with the supernatural terrors of the Church which can deliver the offender to Satan. Superstitious men would not fear the State which when it had killed the body had nothing more that it could do, but would fear rather the Church, which could destroy both body and soul in hell. Again and again the General Assembly affirmed its right to affix its censures without regard to the rank and position of the culprit. In the heyday of its power, it boasted that "the gospel so triumphed in this country that no man of what rank soever durst profess himself to be a Papist or of contrarie

religion."[4] The most arrogant of the Popes could claim no more than was claimed by the Assembly.

It is true that Melville and those associated with him were combating a very real and pressing danger. The Court party wished to enlist the Church as a kind of spiritual police. Had Morton or King James prevailed, the Church would have been a mere department of the State, reinforcing its decisions with spiritual thunder.

The favourite maxim of James VI. "No bishop; no king," was dictated with the same aim. The maxim is entirely true if we understand king as meaning absolute prince. A hierarchy is always more amenable to Court influences than a popular assembly.

But in their endeavour to prevent disaster in one direction the Assembly provoked it in another. It formulated and regularised the dualistic conception of the world, it did not invent it; that religious conception is as old as anything of which we have any knowledge;

[4] Row, *History*, p. 11.

it inspired the Hebrew doctrine of God and Satan, and Christian eschatology is the despairing acquiescence in its finality. The Church of Rome also adopted this conception, but devised mitigations of it. Inheriting the wonderful imperial instinct of pagan Rome, the Roman Church conquered and then consolidated its conquests by conciliation and concession. It was the most widely tolerant of all Churches, and what we call its corruptions[5] were but the outcome of its conciliatory methods. It admitted national heroes to its pantheon as saints, re-christening them but leaving their identity untouched; it took the national and religious observances of the

[5] Something may be said in favour of Goethe's criticism of Protestantism as having too few sacraments. A sacrament marks some special meeting-place of life and religion. Paedo-baptism, though unscriptural, marks the true instinct of the Church in providing for the consecration of life at its beginning. Confirmation is the consecration of the entrance upon adult life; marriage, the most important event in adult life, and dying—the departure from life—would seem appropriate for consecration also, and might have their appropriate sacraments, as they have in the Church of Rome.

pagans[6] whom it converted and found a place for them in its ritual. It consecrated art and music; by its doctrine of purgatory it mitigated the harshness of the Christian eschatology; its masses for the dead, its dispensations to the living, were all of them accommodations not merely to human weakness but to inexpugnable facts of human nature.

Good in themselves, or at least in their intention, these things became evil by abuse, when no longer kept in their place as mitigations, and, as it were, exceptional, they were thrust into prominence as the main thing, and used as engines by means of which the Church might enslave the people and fill its coffers.

Having affirmed the right of the Church to govern itself without reference to external authority, the Book of Discipline next takes

[6] "The transition (from paganism to Christianity) was softened by the substitution of Christian ceremonies and saints for the festivals and the divinities of the pagans. A religion which professed to be Christianity, and which contained many of the ingredients of pure Christianity, had risen into the ascendant, but it had undergone a profound modification through the struggle. Religions as well as worshippers had been baptised." Lecky: *History of Morals*, II., p. 181.

up the subject of internal organisation. Four orders, and only four are recognised, namely, pastors, doctors, elders, and deacons. All others are declared to be unscriptural.[7] Bishops[8] are swept away with scant courtesy; superintendents share the same fate. The Assembly may appoint visitors, but visitation of churches is not an office ecclesiastical.

Although parliamentary ratification was not at that time obtained for the Book of Policy, the Assembly proceeded to put in force the

[7] The facility with which the most rigid sticklers for the authority of Scripture get rid of such of its provisions as they may find inconvenient is well illustrated by the conduct of the Reformers. In the First Book of Discipline, the imposition of hands at ordination is dispensed with, on the ground that "the miracle having ceased, the ceremony ought not to be continued." Obviously the same argument might be used for the discontinuance of prayer. *Cf.* on the other hand *Institutes IV.*, xiv. 20, where Calvin attributes a Sacramental character to the laying on of hands. In the Second Book of Discipline the Order of Apostles, the admission of which would of course be fatal to parity, is, along with those of prophets and evangelists, declared to be extraordinary, and therefore temporary. But it looks as if the apostles themselves had intended their office to be permanent, for they filled up the vacant places in the Apostolate; permanent, however, in a very limited sense, since the Second Advent was expected at any moment.

[8] "Therefore all the ambitious titles, invented by the kingdom of anti-Christ in his usurped hierarchy, which are not one of these four sorts, together with the offices depending thereupon, ought, in one word, to be abolished." *Second Book of Policy.*

provisions which it contained; thus was the gage of battle thrown down, and there was immediately precipitated the conflict which for more than a century unchained some of the worst passions of human nature, and made Scotland the arena where hatred, persecution and murder proclaimed themselves as champions of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Of course there were better things mixed with the evil. Gleams of heroism shine through the murderous fog of bigotry and strife; but that God maketh the wrath of men to praise Him is no reason why we should call their wrath good.

At first, such charity as there was in Scotland was seen upon the episcopal side. Archbishop Spottiswood moved in the thick of the events which he records, and his *History*, while not concealing its author's sympathies, displays a restraint, a moderation and urbanity,[9] which deserve the highest praise.

[9] M'Crie's charge of "spleen," *Life of Melville*, p. 333, levelled at Spottiswood, is not only unfounded, but comes badly from one who is himself intemperate in judgment. Spottiswood's tribute to John Knox is one of the finest extant, and is evidently sincere; he also bears testimony to the amiable qualities of James Melville.

Not only, therefore, because the popular impression in Scotland is that all the violence and intolerance were upon the episcopal side, which was clearly not the case; but because the passions and bigotry developed in the conflict were a powerful contributory influence in the development of the later puritanism, it will be necessary to deal with this unedifying matter in some detail.

The process is plain enough. It is matter of daily observation that disputes between individuals or parties, which to begin with are confined to one point, very soon involve other points; hostility arises, motives are imputed, characters are aspersed, and the disputants at last will believe no good of each other.

The accession of James I. to the throne of England, which took place on the death of Queen Elizabeth, influenced ecclesiastical affairs in Scotland. The Presbyterian party expected that the monarch would use his new and larger powers to reform further the Church of England. They remembered his

eulogy of the Scottish Church and his characterization of the English Prayer Book as "an ill-said Mass in English wanting only the liftings." What the ministers forgot was that James had his grievances against the Kirk. The ministers had been too candid friends. In the Assembly and in their pulpits they had used great plainness of speech concerning any action of the King of which they disapproved. They had rebuked him to his face, singling him out, as he sat in his pew, for animadversion and exhortation, which led sometimes to unrehearsed episodes in the course of divine service, when the King in his pew entered into argument with the preacher.[10]

The change from candour of this sort to the deferential if not obsequious courtesy of the

[10] "Patrick Simson, preaching before the King on the text, 'Where is Abel thy brother?' made reference to the murder of the Earl of Moray, brother of the first Regent, by Huntly, and said to the King before the congregation, 'Sir, I assure you in God's name, the Lord will ask at you, Where is the Earl of Moray, your brother?' The King replyed before all the congregation: 'Mr. Patrick, my chalmer door was never steeked upon you, ye might have told me anything you thought in secret.' He replyed: 'Sir, the scandall was publict.' And after, being sent for to the castell, went up with the Book under his oxter, affirming that would plead for him." Row's *History*, pp. 144-45.

English Court must have been as delightful as it was great. The King had escaped from remonstrance and rebuke, from such daily incidents as that when Melville plucked him by the sleeve and called him "God's silly vassal," and now, for the first time in his life, he enjoyed the flattery generally extended to kings, which in his case found classical and enduring expression in the Preface to the Authorised Version of the Bible. This change, so complete and agreeable, was bound to influence the King's ecclesiastical predilections. Instead of furthering Reformation in England, James became an agent for the promotion of reaction in Scotland, and used his efforts for the episcopalising of the Kirk. The Archbishop of Canterbury at this time was Richard Bancroft, a man of wisdom and moderation,[11] to whose natural courtesy some who were opposed to him testify. Appreciating the delicacy of the situation, he

[11] Nevertheless he enforced the anti-puritan Articles of his predecessor Whitegift, requiring conformity in respect of vestments and sacraments.

set himself to advance his policy in such a way as to offend as little as possible Scottish susceptibilities. Bishops were introduced into the Church, but there was no interference with the ritual, and not much with the organisation. The bishops so introduced had little authority; they performed the functions of superintendents and visitors already familiar to presbyterians. No doubt he aimed at something different ultimately, but he wished the change to be gradually brought about. Bancroft died in 1610, and the management of this business passed into other and very different hands. His successor Laud had neither tact nor patience, and irritated people more by the manner of doing things than by the things themselves. With him as their leader, the Canterburians, as they were called, grew more active and insistent in Scottish ecclesiastical matters, and the episcopal party in Scotland came to be regarded there, and not unjustly, as the agents of Anglicanism.

Thus a new element of bitterness was imported into the controversy and a new

weapon put into the hands of the presbyterians, for episcopacy added to its sin of being unscriptural the sin of being un-Scottish. The acerbity of theological and ecclesiastical polemics is proverbial, and in the seventeenth century it was so much sharper than now, as the fervour of religious conviction was greater in that century than in this.

The question as to whether a Church should be constituted upon the episcopal or the presbyterian plan is one which involves no moral issue. A good man may adopt either view; but such tolerance our presbyterian fathers did not understand. Episcopacy was unscriptural, and therefore sinful, bishops[12] were "enemies of Christ's Evangel" and audacious usurpers of Christ's prerogative; later on (for so does prejudice grow), they were "wolves, crafty toades, dogs, filthy swine, devilish seed."

Whether the famous recantation of Patrick

[12] "Balaams dumber nor asses and blinder nor moles, Judases who for money have betrayed Christ; profane Esaus, Shemiahs." Letter of James Melville, Row's *History*, p. 169.

Adamson was sincere or extorted, it is at least instructive as showing what presbyterian sentiment was at the time. He was a man greatly distinguished for talent and learning, and was advanced to be archbishop of St. Andrews; but was later deposed, and excommunicated by the Assembly and abandoned by the King, was reduced to the last extremity of wretchedness and want, and brought to his death-bed. So desperate was his position, that he was brought to the necessity of appealing to Melville for help, though his had been the hand which had humbled him. According to the statement of one side, Melville went at once and befriended him. According to the other side, Melville went in order to secure a statement which might be of service to the presbyterian cause. Certain it is at least that soon afterwards Adamson's recantation of his past errors was communicated to the Assembly.

In this recantation the archbishop confessed that out of covetousness he had possessed the pelf of the Kirk and for vain glory sought pre-

eminence of office. When the recantation was received the Assembly "knowing what grief that pamphlet called *The King's Declaration* was to the godly," represented to the miserable man, who could hardly be considered a free agent, that it was expedient he should repudiate the *Declaration* and "subscribe in the margent thereof his awin judgement to every Article and head thereof, condemning the samen whilk was worthy to be condemned."

Presbyterianism would be in evil case indeed if it could draw strength from such a recantation, whether extorted or volunteered, yet Adamson's recantation was printed as a public document and widely circulated as "a worthy monument of God's mercy towards His Church in justifying the righteous cause thereof and in condemning the crooked course of all sorts of crooked adversaries." Row of Carnock who reports the incident at great length and relies on it as a proof of the insincerity of all the bishops might have remembered his own apothegm, "*Raro vidi pœnitenten clericum.*"

The temporary triumph of presbytery in 1592 had done nothing to decrease the bitterness of controversy, and the restoration of episcopacy in 1610 greatly increased it. Row has preserved in his pages a number of "poesies," in circulation about this time; they are in Latin so that they were probably written by a minister; Row "Englishes" them with obvious relish. If the charges made in those poesies are true, then the bishops at that time in Scotland must have been monsters. Every sin in the Decalogue, and some not in it, are laid at the door of the bishops collectively and individually. "Odious to all," says Row, "who knew their perjury and pride, their profanness and licentious living at this time." Gladstanes,[13] Archbishop of St. Andrews, is singled out for special castigation. He died in 1615, and Row reports his death in a way that cannot be regarded as other than gloating over it. He says that he died of a loathsome disease, a clear judgment of providence. "The day of

[13] Spottiswood admits that Gladstanes had impoverished the see by his extravagance.

the funeral being windy and stormy blew away the pall that was carried above his head and marred all the honours that was carried about his coffin." A shockingly ribald petition is ascribed to him as "his evening prayer after supper." "He was a vile and bellie-god beast." "Let that perjured apostate's filthy memorie stink, rot, perish."

On the other hand, the vocabulary of laudation is exhausted in describing the anti-prelatists. They are "precious ministers of Christ," "gracious professors of the truth," "servants of Jesus Christ," "verie learned, holie, sober and meek, godlie, worthie."

One is sorry to record such uncharity on the one hand and self-righteousness on the other, but it has a distinct bearing upon our subject. If such slanders were current in laboured verse, and if they were thought worthy by a serious historian and minister of standing and reputation in the Kirk, of a place in his chronicle, then we may be sure that they formed a regular part of the ecclesiastical campaign, and were thundered from many

pulpits; for testifying against the vices of the times was a duty specially enjoined by the Church upon its ministers. Curses like these come home to roost. Hatred blinds those who indulge in it, poisoning their judgment at its source.

Bishops stood for many things besides episcopal government, and those other things which happened to be associated with them fell also into odium; the accidents as well as the essence of episcopacy became hateful. Thus the bishop stood for fine churches, fine churches therefore were an abomination. "Antichristian bishops," says Row, "had a great care of all gorgeous, pompous outwards:" the implication being that "gorgeous outwards" were antichristian also.

About 1580, the church of St. Giles in Edinburgh had been divided into two portions, called the Great and Little Kirks, by running a partition through the middle. In 1633 an order came from the king in London directing that this partition should be removed and the church restored to its former condition so as

to serve for a cathedral to the newly erected see of Edinburgh. Row tells us, that "manie good Christians both in Edinburgh and the countrie did heavilie complaine of this to God, knowing it to be an evident beginning of an hudge desolation to come."

Hence that taste for the mean and ugly in church architecture which, according so well with the parsimony of heritors, has produced all over Scotland churches which are a national reproach; and as it is impossible to limit the penalties of our errors to the department in which the errors arise, Scottish civilization as a whole has had to suffer in the vulgarising of the public taste, which is a heavy price to pay for the objection of Row's godly friends to "pompous and gorgeous outwards."

Again, episcopacy was associated with a fine, or at least orderly service. Knox's Liturgy, as we have seen, had been in use from the Reformation. As a whole, the prayers in that collection are devout and expressed in dignified language, though there are phrases characteristic of the harshness and

violence of the times. The bishops wanted more. They desired provision made for the observance of the Christian Year, so that the days connected with the chief events in the life of our Lord might be commemorated. They desired more and better music; they desired that communicants should receive the communion kneeling.[14] The last proposal was with reason objected to on the ground of its tendency to revive the adoration of the host in the Mass.

But out of the presbyterian opposition to these things came the puritan developments in worship—the rejection of all read prayers as impiety, the relegating of the devotional part of the service to the inferior place of mere preliminaries to the sermon, and that order of communion, where, at the changing of the tables, those who have communicated crush out and those who are about to communicate crush in, and there is inevitable jostling, all to the

[14] Knox when in England made strong representations against the practice being retained in the English office; nor was he satisfied with the *Declaration* explaining its use by that Church. *Cf.* D. Macmillan, *Life of Knox*, pp. 56, 57.

accompaniment of the 103rd Psalm, sung to the tune of Coleshill.

Finally, the bishops were not straitlaced, they were human — some all too human. They indulged in recreation, thinking a game of cards[15] or golf not amiss; they even danced or looked on while others danced.

Hence, by way of protest, the puritan view that a sad countenance is a sign of piety, and that recreation is almost sinful; hence the speaking of cards as the "deil's picture books," and the ban of the Church on music and dancing. At first it was the ministers who were expected to display a preternatural solemnity, and if they wished a reputation for sanctity, never to be seen to smile, but to mingle sighs and groans with their conversation; but the well-known tendency for men to

[15] In 1607, Melville was detained in London by an order of the Privy Council and committed for safe custody to the hospitality of the bishops. It was proposed that he should be the guest of Archbishop Bancroft at Lambeth, but he declined the invitation, and evidently to Bancroft's relief, who explained to James Melville his reason for not pressing the invitation, "for our custom is," he said, "after serious matters, to refresh ourselves with cards or other games, but you are more precise." M'Crie: *Melville*, p. 269.

lay on others the same burdens which they have chosen for themselves soon prevailed, and all who professed to be the Lord's people were expected to show those marks of grace.

It was an instance of the law which works for the production and specialisation of type by accentuating characteristic features and eliminating all that mitigates their sharp distinctiveness. It was the re-assertion of that dualism which besets us with its perpetual contradiction—the Scylla and Charybdis of our thought, possibly the inevitable price humanity must pay for being both finite and infinite. It was the deliberate widening of that breach between the world and the Father, between the flesh and the spirit, which it was the real aim of Jesus, not merely to bridge but to close. Paul at his best realised that this was the aim of Jesus, as when he spoke of the ministry of reconciliation; but either because this perception of the apostle was no steady vision but only a passing glimpse, soon clouded over and lost, or else because he counted this gospel too perilous (as perilous

indeed it is) and so sealed it up among the words his soul had heard; "which it is not lawful for a man to utter"—and there are things which point to each of these alternatives —the result was that Paul so expressed himself, that he has been interpreted in a way which makes him not only the obscurer of the Christian gospel but the author of another gospel, which is in some respects its very antithesis; and then came Augustine, closing up every loophole with a Christology which is in very truth a building of prophets' tombs by the children of them who killed the prophets. Therefore, we have that most tragical Figure in history, crowned—but with thorns—and having the consciousness of victory mixed with the foreboding of defeat, saying in one breath: "*I will draw all men unto Me*": "*Nevertheless, when the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith upon the earth?*"

If proof were needed that it was in an atmosphere of opposition and negation that nascent puritanism was nourished into strength, the historical document of 1580, called the

*King's Confession* or *National Covenant*, would supply it. That Confession was the most widely published document of its kind in Scotland. Signed by the King, approved and endorsed by the Assembly, it was read in every Church in the land, re-read and made the theme of exposition, the ministers "labouring in sundrie years to get the oathes and subscriptions of all that would be rightlie informed." This Confession is not one of faith, but of denial; a *non-credo* instead of a *credo*. It was well called the "Negative Confession" by the Marquis of Hamilton.[16] There is not a positive statement in it from beginning to end; it is rejection and repudiation throughout; its theme is not truth but falsehood, abhorrence "of all kinds of Papistry," refusal "of Roman Antichrist, the five bastard sacraments, the devilish Masse, blasphemous transubstantiation."

No doubt, the circumstances were special; the Confession was called into being by the discovery of the treasonable "traffecting" with

[16] Letter of Hamilton to the King, Nov. 27, 1638. *Burnet*, p. 96.

Spain, in which the Earls of Huntly, Errol, and Angus were involved, and it was devised and framed as a touch-stone which, by making it difficult or impossible for Roman Catholics to subscribe, might separate the godly from the enemies of the evangel. But there are laws and sequences which make no allowance for circumstances, and to be nourished on negations is to grow narrow and bitter.

On the other side also a similar process was at work. The bishops' party, deprived of that element of truth which the presbyterians possessed, forced into conflict with it and thrown back upon themselves and their own half truth, accentuated the half truth till it became a lie; pushed the reasonable and indefeasible claims of the state and of civil order till they became the assertion of the divine right of rulers to rule, with the correlative of the duty of passive obedience on the part of the ruled; pushed the claims of the world and nature and society till they became worldliness and moral licence.

The unhappy alienation increased, as has

been said, in the years of episcopal ascendancy which began in 1610. The bishops were at first disposed to use their power with moderation and showed little disposition to persecute. Thus when, in 1617, King James, visiting Scotland after an absence of sixteen years, "caused repair" the Chapel Royal at Holyrood, by setting up an altar with candles and basins, and having an organ built and choristers appointed to sing, and further proposing to set up four figures representing the evangelists, and twelve statues of the apostles, the bishops dissuaded the King. The King forebore, though he remarked sensibly enough that such things were "the books of the unlearned."[17] The extended powers committed to the bishops in the Court of High Commission, were in most cases used with forbearance. Row, for instance, the minister of Carnock and author of the *History of the Kirk*, was "charged that he did continually preach against prelacie as an antichristian offence, against the Five Articles

[17] Calderwood's *History*, p. 673.

enacted at Perth in 1618, and against the rest of the Acts of the sixe pretended null Assemblies" (that is the Assemblies which in 1638 were declared null and void). He was confined to his parish, but afterwards liberated, though still required to preach in his own pulpit, but "he little regarded that, never refusing to preach when he had ane call from neighbour ministers."[18] His continuator records an interview which he had with the Bishop of Dunblane, in which the honours certainly rested with the bishop.[19]

James VI. died in 1625, and his son

[18] Row, p. 326.

[19] The same Mr. John Row did, after this, in Edinburgh, meet with Mr. Adam Bannytine, Lord Bishop of Dunblane, in a strait place where there was no shifting, betwixt the Great Kirk and the back of the Luckenbooths. They had been very familiare as being condisciples at the colledge and afterwards ministers, both avowing one trueth of God. The Bishop holds forth his hand to Mr. John Row, but he, folding his airms and putting his hands under his airme-holls, replies: "Mr. Adam, I will shake no hands with you till you confess and mourn for your perjurie and apostacie; we were four years antagonists at the colledge, it fears me now we shall be antagonists while we live, seeing that you have quat Christ and his cause, and because it is knowen ye have done it especiallie to free your lairdship from debt; remember, I tell you, God's curse will be upon you and your lairdship both." "Well, Mr. John (said the Bishop), I perceive ye are angrie; Fairwell." *History*, p. 326.

Charles I., who succeeded him on the throne, had much less knowledge of and patience with presbyterianism than his father. The influence of the English bishops made itself increasingly felt in Scotland. The Canterburian faction pressed their Scottish brethren to bring their Church into line with the Church of England. Nothing could have been better calculated to exasperate Scottish Presbyterians and Scotsmen generally than this interference of a foreign Church in their affairs. Feeling, bitter enough already, became more bitter still, and when in 1637 the Service-Book imported from England was proposed to be forced on the Church, the effect was immediate and no doubt unlooked for. Supplications poured in upon the King and Council for its withdrawal; riots and violence attended its introduction. The objection was not to a liturgy but to this particular one, both on the ground of its alleged concessions to Romish error in respect of doctrine and ritual, and of the source and manner of its introduction; it was Popish, it was foreign, it had been imposed upon the Church by the

absolute authority of the King. To a liturgy of their own the Scottish people had been long habituated. Row,[20] stout presbyterian as he is, admits uses in a liturgy. "I confess," he says, "good use may be made of a formed liturgy and publickt service to serve for a rule to other Kirks to fall on a like way, finding it warranted by the Word, and to be as a monument to posteritie who thence may learn what forms have been and ought to be used." Nothing could have been more ill-advised than the procedure adopted in this matter by the episcopal party. It seems highly probable that if the bishops had been content to persevere in a policy of moderation, they would in no long time have attained their end.[21]

As it was, the whole country was on fire. "The affections of both sides," says Robert Baillie, "dayly sunders more and more, and

[20] *History*, pp. 43-44.

[21] "This was the view of one so well able to judge as the Marquis of Hamilton, King's Commissioner to the Assembly of 1638, who says: If they (the bishops) had gone the right way about this work, nothing was more easy than to have effected what was aimed at." Letter to the King, Nov. 27, 1638; Burnet's *History*, p. 96.

both gives to other new occasion of misinterpretations;[22] the one puts Poperie, idolatry, and superstition in sundrie things which are innocent of these faults; they speak of the persones and actions of men otherways than it becomes, they give appearance that for the changes already made, albeit no farder were, of their mind to separate. The other seems wilfully to add fuell to the flame."

Pamphlets[23] from English Puritans increased the agitation. "I think our people possessed with a bloody devil far above anything I could have imagined though the Masse in Latin had been presented." So writes Robert Baillie to his correspondent in Holland in

[22] "One collect pretends to begg from God that which they do not presume to name; now what may this (strange thing that may not be named) bee? Sure it is not Christ, grace, remission, heaven, happiness, the pearl of pryce, comfort, direction, protection, the Spirit, guard of angels, daylie bread; for all these things being promised, a child of God dare ask them; but it is most likelie to be the satisfying of some unlawfull and burning lust." Row's *History*, p. 403. The reference evidently is to the petition, "And those things which for our unworthiness we dare not, and for our blindness we cannot ask," etc.

[23] To these pamphlets, or some of them, Baillie applies the terms "scandalous" and "beastlie." *Letters*, I., p. 3.

1637, and he adds, "I pray you help me with some pieces of Brounisme; we will have need of such weapons presently. We are put in hopes to gain these men if we be dexterous; but I am more feared they gaine some of us; for so farr as yet I see, according to the grounds of too many of us, the Brounists' arguments are unanswerable: it is vaine to abhor the conclusion when the antecedent is loved."

Thus did moderate men deplore the violence of a polemic which they saw must lead to puritan extremism. The first actual attempt to introduce the new Service-book into the worship of the Church led to the riotous scene in St. Giles', in which Jenny Geddes figured as the heroine and champion of the affronted people. It was as much as a minister's life was worth to read the service in his church. Some who, to show their zeal in the king's cause, ventured to do so, taking all precautions by arming themselves, their wives and servants, with pistols, and going down early to their churches and closing the doors lest the

congregation should enter and interrupt, were waylaid by infuriated crowds, largely composed of women, who threatened and assaulted them. The Canterburians had sown the wind; very soon they were to reap the whirlwind.

# CHAPTER III

# THE SECOND REFORMATION

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Coming to the General Assembly of 1638 is like passing out of semi-darkness into light, or from a region where the track is barely discernible to one where it becomes a plain and beaten road.

With regard to the early Assemblies, we have the authentic records contained in the Church register, but these are brief to the point of baldness; they give the *gesta* without the *verba*, being mere minutes of the result arrived at and the decisions taken, but giving no information as to the process; and very often the process is more important than the result. In addition, we have the comments and accounts of writers who were themselves

contemporaries, and in some cases eye-witnesses, of the events which they describe, but they wrote for the most part at a considerable interval after the events, so that their accounts are coloured by later acquired prejudices, besides which they were partisans and wrote as propagandists.

With regard to the Assembly of Glasgow in 1638, it is different. We have in the registers a record of the decisions and Acts, the latter numbering 72. We have also the gossipy account of its proceedings in the *Letters* of Robert Baillie, himself a member of that Assembly—a most informing narrative, though it suffers from carelessness in the matter of dates and from want of consecution. There are also preserved in Burnet's *History* and Balfour's *Annales* important historical documents connected with the Assembly; but better than all, we have in the documents unearthed by Peterkin from the Stirling's Library of Glasgow, and preserved in that author's *Records of the Kirk of Scotland*, what is practically a verbatim report of the

Assembly's proceedings. They stand in the limelight, these men of 1638.

We see the turbulent rascals of whose rudeness Baillie complains, surging into the High Kirk to see and hear, so that the members of the Court have to fight and squeeze their way through to their places. The Court is at last set up and some order obtained.

The Marquis of Hamilton is Lord High Commissioner; grave and dignified he sits or stands, vainly essaying the impossible task which had been set him of controlling an Assembly as uncontrollable as a winter flood; urging prelimitations in vain, stating objections in vain, asking "doubles" of important documents, which he does not get; striving faithfully to serve his royal master's cause, and preserving all through the storm and stress an unruffled courtesy; and at last, when he finds the situation impossible, dissolving the Assembly in a speech which for matter and form was clearly the speech of the Assembly. We see the Assembly refusing to be dissolved,

and continuing its sessions. Argyle is there, man of the moody brow, most powerful of Scottish subjects, latest recruit to the Covenant, a pawky highlander, intent above all else on steering a safe course through the abounding perils of the time; to hit later on on the device—largely adopted in later Jacobite times —of allowing his son Lorn to take part in a royalist rising, while he himself keeps up correspondence with Cromwell's generals, assuring them of his love and fidelity, thus to have a footing in both camps for the saving of his house, however things may fall out; trimming his sails to every shift of wind, but not so cleverly as to escape disaster; well might the dogs at Rosneath Castle "yowl" and look up at their master's chamber window for hours together (as Baillie tells us they did) that day the King landed in England; they saw the scaffold on which their master should answer for his doings at this Assembly and elsewhere. Near him Rothes, short and sharp, who had held aloft the Covenant in Greyfriars' churchyard; zealous for religion, but not

impeccable in private life, if all stories are true. Loudon, frequent in intervention and debate and generally for extremes; the same who later negotiated the Engagement as Chancellor, and gifted himself three valuable additions to his estate! My Lord of Burlie, instant for deposition of Mr. Hary Scrymgeour for "abusing of the Kirkyard, break of the sabbath day, and for venting of sundrie points of false doctrine," unmoved by the penitence and tears of Mr. Hary supplicating to be "continowed in his charge and not depryved," though the stern Moderator was moved to compassion. In the chair, Mr. Alexander Henderson—"Moderator without moderation," according to Laud; voted unanimously to the chair, save for one voice—his modest own, as "incomparably the best" for that business; sagacious, alert with thrust and parry, interjecting speeches long and short, but always to the point; courteous for the most part, though able to answer "cuttilie," at times, as Baillie found to his cost, and "venting himself passionatelie" in the private conferences;

guiding the Assembly with firm hand through its seven and twenty sessions; preaching thereafter to the fathers and brethren on the appropriate text: Sit thou at my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool; and, as a tail to his discourse, pronouncing the deposition of the "pretendit" bishops and the excommunication of eight of them; predicting, too, upon them not only eternal torment, but manifest judgments in the present life, yet qualifying his predictions to provide for the contingency of their non-fulfilment; his final sentence a comprehensive curse of all who should attempt to rebuild the walls of the episcopal Jericho that day thrown down. At the table, with his quills and ink-pots and parchments, Johnstone of Warriston, "a non-such for a clerk"; a lawyer, pushful, persistent, tenacious, and not too scrupulous in tactics; who had been secretary to the central Table, and as such contriver and framer of the secret instructions sent down to one chosen minister and one chosen elder of each Presbytery, to be communicated by them only to

such as they deemed safe, showing how the Assemblies were to be packed by choosing of Commissioners who would vote straight, and how, if necessary, Presbyteries were to be flooded by admission of lay elders of known sympathy, so that in Lanerick[1] the elders outnumbered the ministers by more than two to one; with a lawyer's eye to the emoluments of office, for was it not, as he confessed, to provide for his numerous family that he accepted the office of Lord Register Clerk under Cromwell; he also destined to take his last look at things sublunary from the scaffold; whom the panegyrist dismisses to his "eternal crown," with the remark, "The salary" (of Lord Register Clerk) "was surely required." But whether the man, who by his good confession secured high office and large emoluments, and when danger threatened fled to the Continent, and had to be ferreted out of his foreign hiding-place and brought back by force to abide trial and sentence, is entitled

[1] "Eight ministers and eighteen or nineteen elders." *Speech by Hamilton. Burnet*, p. 101.

to the name of martyr, is indeed doubtful. He played a game for high stakes, a game which he knew to be dangerous, though it proved more fatally dangerous than he thought; for a time he carried off the prizes; in the end he paid the bitter price. We should have thought not less of him, if he had been less effusive at his trial and after it in his prayers for the King, whose cause he was never forward to help, and if he had refrained from reference to the "late usurpations," in the sunshine of which, so long as it lasted, he had been well content to bask. The two Archibalds, of Argyle and of Warriston,[2] are but dubious recruits to the noble army. Baillie, genial, clear-sighted, and fair-minded, but too judicious; carried away by a current of which he did not wholly approve, but found impossible to resist. Samuel Rutherford from fair Anwoth on the Solway; the man who preached with a kind of "skreigh" sermons erotic rather than agapetic on texts from Canticles, but so

[2] Though in the latter there was a strong tinge of religious ecstaticism.

seraphically that his congregation were moved to alternate tears and ecstacies; the pre-eminent Saint of the Covenant, author of that most unsaintly book *Lex Rex*, author also of *Letters*, imperishable as sheer poetry; dogged by the shadow of some youthful transgression, probably of an amorous nature, "When the Devil findeth in youth dry sticks and dry coal and a hot hearth-stone, and how soon can he with his flint cast fire and with his bellows blow it up"; of whom Balfour, Lyon King-at-Arms, says, "Lousse in his zouthe, a hatter of all men not of his opinion, and one who if never so light-lie offendit irreconcilable, voyd of mercy and charity." David Dickson, minister at Irvine, —the surname uniformly abbreviated to Dick in the records—discoursing learnedly on controversial points of doctrine, in an apparently "extemporall" manner, which Baillie, with a twinge of neighbourly jealousy (for Irvine is next parish to Kilwinning, which was Baillie's), hints was elaborately prepared. Row of Carnock, in extreme old-age now, but coarse-minded and facetious as ever, "refreshing" (as

he is careful to tell us in his *History*) the grave fathers and brethren with humorous stories, setting the benches and the tables on a roar; for General Assemblies, then as now, were vastly amused by small jokes; and Mr. Alexander Carse, who from the accident of being minister at Polwart and first on the roll of members, is honoured to "voice" first in all causes.

We see them all; they are alive before our eyes, with their pedantic fondness for Latin quotations and legal phrases, their making of protestations and taking of instruments in the Clerk's hand; a band of sincere, earnest, resolute, heroic men, with a large dash of bigotry and the courage which bigotry gives, persevering in their sessions and debates, if they could be called debates where they were all of one mind, even though they knew that the King was preparing his army of foot and horse with its "sufficient train of artillery," for their chastisement. That Assembly did a great work for Scotland, whether entirely blessed or not being matter of opinion. It determined

the character of the Scottish Church. Let us endeavour to estimate its achievement.

Philosophy, as we are told on Plato's authority, is the child of wonder, and religion, which is the elder sister of philosophy, must own the same parentage. Religion is the acknowledgment of a Being and an order of which we are conscious, but which we cannot apprehend. Consequently, mystery is an essential element in religion, and the most deeply religious utterances in the Bible are those which confess so; such utterances we have in the conception of God as veiled in clouds and darkness, or what is the same thing, dwelling in light that is inaccessible; for light that dazzles and blinds comes to the same thing as darkness. Paul striving to apprehend that of which he was apprehended is a witness to this truth. To this mystery the Roman Church does full justice. This is the truth underlying the phrase, "*Credo quia non intelligo*," which is only another way of saying that we walk by faith and not by sight; this is the truth, too, underlying the symbolism of the Roman ritual,

so ruthlessly cut down by the Reformers. Of the change which the Reformation wrought, the difference between a Catholic and Protestant place of worship is symbolic; the former with its dim religious light, its chancel wrapped in a gloom which the candles glimmering at the altar emphasise rather than dispel, and with its Latin prayers unintelligible to the mass of worshippers, offers a complete contrast to the Protestant church flooded with electric light, every corner illuminated; the former is the recognition of mystery, the latter its abolishment.

Calvin was the sworn foe of mystery in religion. He would have shone as a lawyer. Jurisprudence had been his special study; his thoughts ran in legal grooves, and in terms of legal procedure he explained the eternal and divine. In human affairs, the law is above the judge, whose business is simply to interpret and administer it. The law must be vindicated by the punishing of offences against it; the culprit must be penalised. In capital offences, no substitute can be allowed to take

the culprit's punishment upon him, but in cases of pecuniary fine the law is satisfied if the fine be paid, no matter by whom. In some cases the judge himself has been known to pay the fine for the culprit, in this way at once vindicating the law and extending mercy to the guilty person. On these lines Calvin worked out his Theology.[3] God was conceived of as a judge administering a law above Him, a law which He must vindicate. That law man had broken, and should pay the penalty for his breach of it; but by a stretch of legal procedure, Calvin assumes that even here vicarious payment can come in. The Second Person of the Trinity comes forward as friend and substitute for the guilty, and offers to pay for the bankrupt culprit; which offer is accepted. It is a purely business transaction, with no mystery and little sentiment about it. Now, men's minds have moved away from the point where such a theory satisfies; but this theory

[3] It is not meant to represent Calvin as the inventor of this theory, he found it ready to his hand in the old divines; but he formulated and systematised it anew.

satisfied the great intellects of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; it completely satisfied the Assembly of 1638.

In that Assembly Mr. David Dickson was called upon by the Moderator to "clear and expone" the case against Arminianism. Arminianism, while accepting in the main the reformed orthodox position, gives some play to human free-will; it makes the death of Christ a death for all, so that salvation is possible for all but certain for none, since any can reject it who choose. Dickson thus disposed of that view: "Our Lord was never so evil a merchand as to laye down his lyfe and never will therefor (never stipulate for the same), nor sick a foole as to make a bargaine which might be suspendit by man's fickle free-will; who that hes that much prudence that he can foresee a losse or danger, he will govern it. In this Covenant of redemption betwix God and the Second Person called mediatour the elect were designed and condescendit particularlie upon, their number and names with their gifts of grace and glorie to be bestowed upon them, and the

time to bestow it, was all condescendit and agreed upon. The pryce of the redemption, what and how much should be payit by the Redeemer for the purchase of all these gifts, how long He should beholden captive of death, etc., was all determined." By this argument Dickson gained applause and reputation, the Moderator congratulating him upon his effective discomfiture of Arminian disputants. No mystery and little sentiment in all this. So absolutely convinced were the Presbyterians of Scotland at that time, not only of the truth but of the obviousness of the truth of this theology, that it seemed to them sheer blindness[4] in those who were unable to see it. Not only was this the way in which God had acted, it was the only possible way in which He could have acted, since any other way would have been folly. The secret of intolerance and separation is here. Peterkin marvels that Protestants who founded on the right of private judgment should yet have become persecutors, and

[4] *Cf.* II. Cor. iv. 3: But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost.

declares that he has never heard or seen a satisfactory explanation of the contradiction. But the explanation is obvious enough and is to be found in human nature. The revolutionary socialist so long as he is poor may remain what he is, but we are not surprised if, when he becomes wealthy, he adopts more conservative principles. The Reformers, so long as they were in a minority, were for liberty; when they became a majority they persecuted; the right of private judgment meant really *their* right of private judgment. To expect men with a clear-cut theology of this kind to be tolerant is to ask impossibilities.

This theology also helps to explain the gloom so characteristic of Scottish Puritanism. In 1638 it was not gloomy. Grace and election were in the foreground; they were the principal features in the plan of salvation.

But obviously it only needed a slight change of standpoint to alter the whole perspective and make wrath and reprobation the chief things. As arguments these are more effective. The Calvinistic heaven is not alluring; human

nature could hardly support a perpetual Sabbath of the Genevan type, and that is how the Calvinists represent heaven. But if heaven is not alluring, hell is at least terrifying and repelling, and ministers naturally used the more effective instrument. With wrath and reprobation was associated Satan as their instrument, and this personage came to occupy a larger and larger place in pulpit discourses until, in the eighteenth century, he practically divided the sovereignty with God, being represented as nearly as powerful and much more efficient. The devil and his ubiquity, hell and its terrors became the favourite themes of popular preaching.

Armed with this theology, possessed with the conviction that they had absolute truth, the men of 1638 passed on their imperious way.

They swept aside six previous Assemblies, declaring them null and void; they swept aside Acts of Parliament; they deposed all the bishops and excommunicated those of them who would not submit and abjure their error, declaring them "ethnicks and publicanes";

they swept aside the Book of Canons and the Service-Book; they ordained all subjects of the realm to subscribe the Covenant under pain of excommunication, and in those days excommunication meant outlawry, social ostracism, confiscation and ruin. Under the same penalty they discharged and prohibited all ministers from printing anything touching religion, the Covenant or the Assembly "without warrand in the Clerk's hand."

The Assembly of 1639[5] confirmed all these enactments, and stretched the ecclesiastical prerogative still further, calling for the punishment of Dr. Balcanquall, Dean of Durham, for his share in the production of the manifesto, known as the *Large Declaration*, in which the proceedings of the previous Assembly had been animadverted on.

"The Moderator desired some of the brethren to give their judgement of the said Booke. Mr. Andro Cant said: It is so full of grosse absurdities that I think hanging of the author should prevent (precede) all other

[5] Assembly 1639, Session 25.

censures. The Moderator answered: That punishment is not in the hands of kirkmen. The Sherriff of Teviotdale being asked his judgement said: Ye were effended with a churchman's hard sentence alreadie, but truely I could execute that sentence with all my heart, because it is more proper to me, and I am better acquainted with hanging. My Lord Kircudbright said: It is a great pitie that manie honest men in Christendom, for writing little bookes called pamphlets, should want eares; and false knaves for writing such volumes should brook heads."

However, the Assembly "after consideration of the dishonour to God of saide booke," contented itself with demanding its recall, the expression of the King's "dislyke" of it and the "examplarie punishment" of the author.

It might have been expected that the second Reformation having been successfully accomplished, all would have been peace, the good ship Presbytery after a long and stormy voyage having at length reached its haven. The older members of the Assembly had praised and

blessed God, but they were spared to see the gracious day. But there is no finality in these things. The puritan forces were by no means exhausted, the goal moved for ever and for ever as those who sought it moved. No sooner was the second Reformation secured than the movement for a third Reformation began. Year by year there was a steady growth in intolerance and scrupulosity, and it must be added in pharisaic self-righteousness.

In citing these things there is no intention of laying them to the charge of our Covenanting forefathers as though they were evidence of some turpitude or obliquity. These men were the children of their time, as all men must be. We do not discover ideas; rather do they discover us.[6] The metaphor so often on our lips expresses a great truth—as when we say, It never dawned on me. It was not blindness which kept our fathers from seeing the beauty of toleration; that star had not then risen above the horizon; its hour was not yet

[6] So Wordsworth—

> "High instincts before which our mortal nature
> Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised."

come. Nor could anything be more unreasonable than to compare the Covenanters in this respect, and to their disadvantage, with Cromwell. The cases were not parallel. In Cromwell the political instinct was at least as strong as the religious, and it pointed to the expediency, if not the necessity, of tolerating[7] religious differences. The sectaries were his best soldiers. The Covenanters were not concerned merely with their own private spiritual convictions;[8] they had as they thought not only objective truth but all truth; there

[7] It should be noted that Roman Catholics and Episcopalians were not tolerated, but only varieties of Puritanism.

[8] The absolute conviction of the Covenanters that they were not only right, but so clearly and irrifragably right that nothing but wilful blindness and moral perversity could keep anyone from seeing that they were right, accounts for much of their conduct. The Assembly of 1642 adopted a supplication to the Privy Council requiring lists to be made of Papists, their servants and children—they were to be convened and give over their children above seven years of age to be educated by Protestant friends approved by the Presbytery. The same Assembly, urging upon the King this rule for England as well as for Scotland, spoke thus of its consummation, "Harpers harping with their harps, which shall fill the whole Island with melodie and mirth, and the name of it shall be, The Lord is there." But to others the prospect seemed less pleasing. "The whole west of Scotland cry'd up King Christ and the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, thereby meaning the uncontrollable and unlimited dominion of the then Kirk of Scotland, to whom they thought our Saviour had handed over his sceptre."—*Memoirs of Sir James Turner.*

were no dim unlighted spaces in their universe. The problem they could not solve was how to reconcile loyalty to assured truth with toleration of those who denied it; it may be doubted if the problem is soluble at all; our solution of which we are so proud is largely indifference. We are not sufficiently interested in our religion to hate those who oppose it; we are not sufficiently sure of our ground to say that the man who stands somewhere else is wrong.

This objectivity of their religion, this conception of truth, as quite independent of human notions about it, was both the strength and the weakness of the Covenanters. By linking them to the eternal and absolute, it made them strong to do and to suffer; on the other hand, it made them inaccessible to new ideas, and was fatal to progress: having all truth already, how could they receive new truth? and thus being unable to move with the times, they became in the end an anachronism.

Of this faith of theirs, the Covenant was the exponent and instrument. At first their staff to support them, it grew to be their crushing

incubus and binding chain. The name by which they called it is deeply significant. Their religion was one of covenants. There was the covenant between God and Christ before the world was; there was the covenant entered into between God and the faithful man, the covenant of grace and salvation; there was the covenant of works, somewhat illusory since its terms were *ex hypothese* beyond man's power to implement. To this series our forefathers added another covenant, in which they agreed with God that they would be a peculiar people, and purge the Church and the land from all ungodly. By its very name, therefore, it suggested the highest and holiest associations: it was a new dispensation, a new page had been added to the archives of eternity. It was not a human bond entered into between men, at least not that merely or even chiefly, but was pre-eminently an engagement of each individual with God. It was a new rite of spiritual circumcision, a coming out from the midst of the uncovenanted and unclean and being separate.

In the time of the bishops a practice had grown up of holding private meetings[9] for devotion and converse, at which select souls were wont to refresh themselves and confirm each others' singularities. These had been called by various opprobious epithets by their opponents, as, for instance, "candle-light conventions," from the tendency to prolong themselves far into the night. After 1640 this practice was revived, and, as was to be expected, led to the desertion of the ordinary services; so grave did the abuse become, and so provocative of schism, that the Assembly took up the question, and endeavoured, though

[9] "At sundry tymes of this yeare (1621) there were sundry private meetings of ministers and other good christians in Edinburgh, setting part days for fasting, praying and humiliation, crying to God for help in such a needful tyme: which exercises joyned with handling of scripture, resolving of questions, clearing doubts and tossing of cases of conscience, were verie comfortable and proved verie edificative to those who were partakers of them, for they grew exceedinglie both in knowledge and grace. Thir meetings, the bishops and their followers (enemies still to the power of godliness and life of religion) hated to the death; and sundrie ministers of Edinburgh inveighed against them under the name of unlawful conventicles, candle-light congregations (because sometimes they continued their exercises for a great part of the night), persecuting them with odious names of Puritans, Separatists, Brownists."—Row's *History*, p. 328.

not with complete success, to put an end to the meetings.

The civil troubles of the times also supplied occasion of division in the Kirk. The Covenant contained a clause in which the taker of it bound himself to the defence of the king. As a whole the Scottish people cherished strong monarchical sentiments and were animated by personal loyalty to their sovereign. On the other hand, they were deeply religious and, as being so, able to support the royal cause only so far as that cause did not conflict with what they believed to be the cause of Jesus Christ: in other words they would support the king so long as he governed according to their ideas of what was right. The harsh treatment of Charles I. by the Parliamentary party, a treatment for some share in which the Scottish people could not divest themselves of responsibility since it was they who had handed him over to his enemies, caused a revulsion of feeling in Scotland, and a movement was authorised for the king's support. An army was raised and invaded

England under the Duke of Hamilton; the expedition ended in the disaster of Preston and the execution of its leader. This resolution to support the king by force of arms was never fully approved by the Church. Those who took part in it were called Engagers, and the lawfulness of the Engagement soon became a burning question. The extreme party in the Church considered the Engagers[10] to have been guilty of a breach of Covenant, and a sinful compliance with malignancy. An Act of Classes was passed excluding from the army and all offices of public trust those who by active support or by passive compliance had shown approval of the "late unlawful Engagement." In conformity with this Act, a campaign was initiated for purging the army and judicatories, as well as the Church itself, from all who were suspect. Even in the hour

[10] So called from the Engagement of 1648 entered into at Newport, Isle of Wight, between Charles I. and certain leading Scotsmen, of whom Chancellor Loudon was one. By this agreement Scottish support was to be given to the king, who on his part undertook to confirm the Covenant, establish presbyterianism in England, suppress the sectaries, and grant commercial concessions to Scotland.

of crisis, when Cromwell's army lay within easy reach of Edinburgh, the ministers went on with their purgation, sending away from the ranks large numbers, both of officers and men. A *Warning* was issued by the Committee of Assembly in 1650, "That those who are tainted with malignancy and disaffection to the cause of God should not be allowed or permitted to associate themselves together or join together in arms, much less should we associate or join with them or make use or employ or countenance or permit them to be in our army; that we have solemnly engaged ourselves against this, and should be desperately perverse to hazard upon it, and were to give great encouragement to the Sectaries and discourage the hearts and weaken the hands of men of integrity and godliness who could hardly expect a blessing in the fellowship of such; that it were from the words of our own former confessions and engagements unto duties to proclaim judgment against the land till it were consumed without remedy; that it were a shame for any in this land to be so faithless

and unbelieving as because of the scarceness of men to make use of such."

"Presently," says Sir James Balfour, "the committee commanded away all malignants and engagers, and so lessened the army by three or four thousand of the best men, and displaced all officers suspected, concluding that they were an army of saints, and that they could not be beaten; for so their lying prophets daily told the people out of the pulpit."

After the defeat inflicted by Cromwell upon the Scottish army at Dunbar, the need was felt for some relaxation of a measure which operated to exclude those well able and willing to serve their country in the army. Accordingly the public Resolutions were submitted to and approved of by the Assembly. The effect of these was to admit to the army and to public office such excluded persons as should express penitence for past errors. But the stricter party resisted such concession, and organizing themselves under the name of Protesters they effected a complete schism in 1651, repudiating the authority of the General

Assembly. The schism spread through the Church, Resolutioners and Protesters alike, if outvoted in Synod or Presbytery, made no scruple of separating and constituting a rival Synod or Presbytery of their own. Bitterness increased; the conflicts of jurisdiction resulted in the appointing in some cases of two ministers to the same charge, in which conflicts the Protesters, having Cromwell's favour, generally managed to carry their point. The disorder might have been put an end to if the General Assembly had kept its sessions, but from 1653 onwards the General Assembly was not allowed to meet, a suppression of which the Protesters approved, and may even have suggested, for it could be nowise to their advantage to have a General Assembly, in which past experience had taught them that they would be a minority, revived for their discomfiture.

The Protesters became the depositaries of the puritanic idea. They were the extremists, sincere in their fanatical attachment to the Covenant, men who would if they could have made their consciences a rule for the world;

men like James Guthrie who died on the scaffold uttering as his last words: "The Covenants, the Covenants, shall yet be Scotland's reviving"; Guthrie, "a pryme enemie to monarchie, a chieffe plotter of the Western Remonstrance division and mischieffe, and a maine preacher to the Sectaries."[11]

[11] Balfour's *Annales*. But there were others who if not moved by worldly motives were at least suspected of being so; men like Patrick Gillespie, who secured the Principalship of Glasgow University by means of the English influence.

# CHAPTER IV

# THE EXTREMISTS

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We have considered the conflict between the presbyterian and episcopal parties in the Church of Scotland, and have seen how as time passed it grew in bitterness. The view has been advanced that the conflict was really one between Protestantism and Romanism. "In resisting Episcopacy," we are told, "the Scottish people were by a strong native instinct resisting Popery, which lay behind it. Upon this theory, and upon this alone, we are enabled to account for that inbred and undying dislike of the Episcopal system, which has seemed to some observers so irrational and ungrounded."[1] No one will deny that this fear of episcopacy as a sort of half-way house to Rome was widely entertained in Scotland comparatively recently, and may in some

[1] Lee Lecture: Professor H. M. B. Reid, D.D., in *A Professor's Wallet*, pp. 143-4.

quarters linger. If the view above stated could be established, it would no doubt do this service, that it would simplify and rationalise the historical process, which is both confused and confusing. But may it be established? A certain amount of evidence can be cited in support. Beza, who himself directly, and through Melville indirectly, exercised a powerful influence upon Scottish opinion, said, "As Bishops brought forth the Pope, so thir false bishops, who are nothing but remainders and relicts of the Papacie, will bring in Epicurism and atheism in the world."[2] So, too, Row himself: "Antichrist is the Devil's eldest son and heir, and a proud prelat is Antichrist's son and heir, and an hierarchical doctor is the prelat's eldest son and heir."[3] The epithet

[2] Row: *History*, p. 261.

[3] The substance of Episcopal teaching is thus described:—The Pope is not Antichrist; a Papist living and dying thus may be saved. Christ descended locallie to Hell; Christ died for all, intentionally to redeem all. There is universall grace. The saints may fall from grace finally and totally. Christ is really present in the Sacrament; Verbum audimus, motum sentimus, modum nescimus; they would neither (as yet) speak out consubstantiation nor transubstantiation.—Row, p. 372.

A strange miscellanie farrago and hotch-potch of Poperie, Arminianisme, Lutheranisme and whatnot.—*Ib.* pp. 371-372.

"Papistical" is very frequently applied in the controversial literature of the time to bishops who are accused of "venting" popery. But, on the other hand, there is a weight of evidence pointing in a contrary direction. The original view of the Scottish Church was certainly not that episcopacy was Roman.[4] The Assembly of 1566 addressed a letter to "Our Brethren the Bishops in England," which, while appealing for lenient dealing with the Puritans, and strongly condemning the wearing of priestly vestments, breathes not the slightest objection to an episcopate. Knox's own words show that he was perfectly satisfied with the Reformation effected in 1560, and he was a

[4] "The Reformation of Scotland had this peculiar advantage above all (other Protestant Churches), that at once and from the beginning both doctrine and worship, discipline and government were reformed; as Mr. Knox witnesseth that there was no realm upon the face of the earth at that time that had religion in greater purity. 'Yea,' says he, 'we must speak the truth whomsoever we offend; there is no realm that hath the like purity, for all others, how sincere soever the doctrine may be, retain in their churches and the ministry thereof some footsteps of anti-Christ and dregs of popery; but we (praise to God alone) have nothing in our churches that ever flowed from that Man of Sin.'"—Shields: *A Hind Let Loose*, p. 16.

consenting and even active party to the Convention of Leith of 1572, by which the bishops were given a place in the constitution of the Church.[5]

Further, if the opinion had been held that episcopacy was really Popery in disguise or the re-making, we should have expected the charge to be made officially and formally. But this we do not find. The charges brought against the bishops in the Assembly of 1638 were those of profligate living, Arminian doctrine and breach of the Covenant. The phrase Second Reformation, as applied to the settlement of 1638, is an indication that that settlement was regarded as an advance on that of 1560. Row himself mentions that the Assembly from the first liked not the name of bishop, "as savouring of a superiority which they thought ought not to be in God's Kirk," which is a very different thing from saying that episcopacy was held to be Romanism in disguise. *The Bill or Complaint of the Noblemen, Barons, etc., against the pretended*

[5] See Spottiswood's *History*, pp. 255, 260.

*Arch-Bishops and Bishops* (*1638*) contains the following: Whereas the office of a Bishop (as it is now used within the realm) was condemned by the Book of Policy and by the Act of the Assembly holden at Dundee anno 1580, whereof these are the words:—"Forasmuch as the office of a bishop hath no sure warrant from authority, but it is brought in by the folly and corruptions of the inventions of men to the great hurt of the Church, etc."

The bishops themselves repudiated any hankerings after Romish error. Thus in signing the King's Covenant in 1638 the Bishops and Doctors of Aberdeen issued the following explanation. "First, we do absolutely abhor and condemn all errors truly popish or repugnant to the Holy Scriptures, and consequently to the uniform Doctrine of the Reformed Kirks, and to our National Confession registered in Parliament." The bishops further say:—"We protest that we embrace and hold that the religion presently professed in the Church of Scotland according to the Confession thereof received by the

estates of this kingdom and ratified in Parliament the year 1567 is the true religion, bringing men to eternal salvation, and we do detest all contrary error. We protest that episcopal government in the Church is lawful and necessary, and that the same is not opposed or impugned for any defect or fault either in the government or governors, but by the malice and craft of the Devil envying the success of that government in this Church these many years by-past, most evident in planting of Churches with able and learned Ministers, recovering of the Church Rents, helping of the Ministers' Stipends, preventing of these jars betwixt the King and the Church which in former times dangerously infested the same, keeping the people in peace and obedience, and *suppressing of Popery, which in respect either in the number of their Professors, or boldness of their Profession, was never at so low an ebb in this Kingdom before these stirs.*" (*Declinator and Protestation of the Arch-Bishops and Bishops of the Church of Scotland, etc., 1638.*)

Finally, the Scottish Bishops were, most of them, married men, and it is hardly likely that they would have laboured to bring back a regime which entailed the loss of their dignities and emoluments.

"Irrational" can be affirmed of the Scottish Presbyterians in respect of their violent opposition to "a mere form of Church government" only when we import twentieth century ideas into the sixteenth and seventeeth centuries. The men of 1638 believed that presbyterian church-government was part of the divine revelation; consequently any other form of church-government was not merely unscriptural but anti-scriptural, and, as such, flagrant disobedience to the divine command. Presbytery being thus in the estimation of its champions an integral part of the faith once delivered to the saints, those who contended against what threatened it cannot be charged with being irrational in doing so.

As we have seen, the men who in the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 stood side by side and voted as one man for the purging of the

Church from bishops and all pertaining to them, and for the settlement of the ecclesiastical constitution and policy upon a severely Presbyterian plan, speedily fell out among themselves. Two parties arose in the Church. One composed of extreme men, who pushed the claim of the spiritual, or, as it ought to be called, the ecclesiastical, to fanatical lengths.

In the Church courts they annexed the whole civil sphere as a department of their jurisdiction. They embarked on a new puritanic crusade, appointing Commissions for "purging" Presbyteries of scandalous and inefficient ministers—a process which occasionally resolved itself in practice into the removal of such as were on any ground obnoxious to the Commissioners. They were the "godly party." They were not above being partial[6] to their own friends. They purged the King's establishment after they had crowned him, removing

[6] "Mr. Robert Semple of Lesmahagow's foul process has been referred to a committee and little done in it, the man being of their syde."—Baillie's *Letters*, III, p. 357.

James Simpson, minister of Airth, involved in serious charges, which were apparently passed lightly over, was sent to London as a member of Commission to advance their interest.—*Ib.* 353.

from his household those whose opinions they did not approve; they purged the army, expelling from its ranks three or four thousand of its best soldiers, in the very hour when every sword was needed to resist the invader Cromwell. They purged the judicatories and offices of public trust by the *Act of Classes*, in which Malignants were classified according to their degree of guilt, and subjected to appropriate penalties, and they inaugurated a new and severe campaign against witches.[7]

[7] It is a remarkable fact that writers who are fully alive to the sufferings of the persecuted Covenanters have so little regard for the victims of the Covenanters' demonological superstition. The Assembly of 1640 ordained all ministers to take notice of charmers, witches, etc., and sent Commissioners from the Assembly to Parliament to urge the execution of the laws against such in the "most behoovful way."

The Assembly of 1643 passed a long Act of seven clauses dealing with the same subject; lamenting the abundance and increase of the sin of witchcraft, specifying its occasions and causes, and the ways and means by which confession of guilt was to be elicited, and conviction secured; the grounds of apprehending them, viz., "Public bruite," "Delations of other witches," "Depositions of honest persons who have suffered malefices." They urged the appointment of a standing Commission. In 1649, the Assembly still bewailing the growth of witchcraft, appointed a mixed Commission of ministers, lawyers and doctors, to make enquiry; of this Commission Rutherford, Cant and Guthrie, leading Protesters, were members. "This summer (1649), there were very many witches taken, and brunt," elsewhere, it is said, "over thirty in Fife alone," within two or three months. Some of

It is not meant that the extreme party, as such, did all these things; some of them were acts of the whole Church, for which the Church

those witches were clearly demented persons: others were the victims of superstition, and still others, it is to be feared, of malice.—(See *Diary of John Lamont of Newton;* also *Diary of John Nicoll.*)

The House appoints a Committee to try the depositions of 34 witches, with power to the said Committee to give out commissions for their further trial, examination and execution, as also to think upon a certain course and commission for that effect hereinafter, and to report.—(Balfour, *Annales*, 22nd May, 1650.)

An earlier instance shows the nature of the depositions relied on. Sir James Melville in his *Memories* records: "About this time many witches were taken in Lothiane who deposed concerning some design of the Earl of Bothwell against His Majesty's person. Especially a renowned midwife called Amy Simson affirmed that she in company with nine other witches being convened in the night, the devil their master being present standing in the midst of them, a body of wax, shapen and made by the same Amy Simson wrapped within a linen cloth was first delivered to the devil; who, after he had pronounced his verdict delivered the said picture to Amy Simson, and she to her next neighbour, and so everyone round about, saying, 'This is King James VI. ordered to be consumed at the instance of a nobleman, Francis, Earl of Bothwell.' Afterward again at their meeting by night in the Kirk of North Berwick, where the devil clad in a black gown, with a black hat upon his head, preached to a great number of them out of the pulpit, having also lighted candles about him."

The deposition goes on to recount a peculiar act of homage required by the devil from his hearers at the close of his preaching. As a result, "Many witches were brunt." Witches were of both sexes. The full depositions were written out for preservation by James Carmichael, minister of Haddington. The belief in witchcraft was universal, but nowhere was the persecution of witches so relentless as under the Puritans both in England and Scotland.

as a whole is responsible; but the Protesters persisted in those courses after the more moderate party of Resolutioners had given them up; and the Covenanters of the Restoration perpetuated the Protesting tradition.

With the Church, the guardian of public morals and order, thus divided against itself, while Resolutioners and Protesters denounced and excommunicated each other, it was hardly to be expected but that the tone of public morality should suffer. According to the diarists of the time, crime abounded; thus, John Nicoll says, "Much falset and cheiting at this tyme was daylie detectit by the Lords of Session, for whilk there was daylie hanging, skurging, nailing of luggis and binding of peepil to the Trone, and boring of tonges, so that it was ane fatall yeir fro false notaris and witnesses, as daylie experience did witness."

But even here the coloured vision due to the play of political and ecclesiastical predilections in the historian comes in. Beattie[8] is "far

[8] *History of the Church of Scotland during the Commonwealth:* James Beattie, p. 269. Beattie's *History*, published in 1841, is clearly a polemic on questions of the day.

from condemning the duty of contending for the faith once delivered to the saints,"—as though that had been the role of the Protesters, and he cavils at Leighton's beautiful observation when reproached with not "preaching to the times": "If all the brethren have preached to the times, may not one poor brother preach to eternity?" And Kirkton paints a picture of the years subsequent to 1638, which makes Scotland a second Eden.[9]

[9] "For though always since the Assembly at Glasgow, the work of the Gospel had prospered, judicatories being reformed, ministers entered and holy constitutions and rules daily brought into the Church, yet now after Duke Hamilton's defeat and in the interval between the two kings, religion advanced the greatest step which it had made for many years; and the ministry was notably purified, the magistracy altered and the people strongly refined. It is true at this time hardly a fifth part of the Lords of Scotland were admitted to sit in the Parliament, but those who did sit were esteemed truly godly men; so were all the rest of the Commissioners in Parliament elected of the most pious of every Corporation. Also godly men were employed in all offices both civil and military; and about this time the General Assembly by sending abroad visitors into the country made almost an entire change upon the ministry in several places of the nation, purging out the scandalous and insufficient, and planting in their places a sort of godly young men whose ministry the Lord sealed with an eminent blessing of success. Scotland hath been even by emulous strangers called Philadelphia, and now she seemed to be in her flower; every minister was to be tried five times a year, both for his personal and ministerial behaviour; every congregation was to be visited by the Presbytery, that they might see how the vine flourished and how the pomegranate budded. And there was no case or

Kirkton gives a further account of the state of Scotland from 1651 to 1660.

"Now, before we speak of the alterations Court influence made upon the Church of Scotland, let us consider in what case it was at this time. There be in all Scotland some 900 paroches, divided into 68 Presbyteries, which are again cantoned into fourteen Synods, out of all which, by a solemn delegation of commissioners from every Presbytery, they

question in the meanest family in Scotland but might become the objects of the deliberations of the General Assembly. Likewise as the bands of the Scottish Church were strong, so her beauty was bright; no error was so much as named, the people were not only sound in the faith, but innocently ignorant of unsound doctrines; no scandalous person could live, no scandal could be concealed in all Scotland, so strict a correspondence there was betwixt ministers and congregation. The General Assembly seemed to be the Priest with Urim and Thumim, and there were not over 100 persons in all Scotland to oppose their conclusions; all submitted, all learned, all prayed, most part were really godly or at least counterfeited themselves Jews. Then was Scotland a heap of wheat set about with lilies, uniform, or a palace of silver beautifully proportioned, and this seems to me to have been Scotland's high noon. The only complaint of profane people was that the government was so strict they had not liberty enough to sin. I confess I thought at that time the common set of ministers strained too much at the sin which in those days was called malignancie (and I should not paint the moon faithfully if I marked not her spots), other ways I think if Church officers could polish the saints of earth as bright as they are in Heaven it were their excellency and their Church's happiness."—*The Secret and True History of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to 1678;* by

used yearly to constitute a National Assembly. At the King's return every paroche had a minister, every village had a school, every family almost had a bible, yea in most of the country all the children of age could[10] read the

the Rev. Mr. James Kirkton. But Nicoll has another tale to tell. "So to end this year of God 1650, the kingdom was for the most part spoiled and overrun with the enemy, even from Berwick to the town of Ayr. . . . The land mourning, languishing and fading and left desolate, every port thereof shut up and no safe coming out or going in, and many treacherous dealers did deal very treacherously, the Lord hiding his face all the time for the sinn of the land."—*Nicoll's Diary*, 1650.

And Baillie "The country lies very quiet, it is exceeding poor; trade is nought, the English has all the monies, our noble families are almost gone, Lennox has little in Scotland unsold. Hamilton's except Arran and the Baronie of Hamilton is sold; Argyle can pay little annual rent for seven or eight thousand marks, and he is no more drowned in debt than public hatred, almost of all both Scottish and English; the Gordons are gone; the Douglases little better; Eglinton and Glencairn on the brink of breaking; many of our chief families' estates are cracking, nor is there any appearance of any human help at this time."—*Letters* III., 387.

"Names of Protestants and Papists not now in use nor has been thir sundrie years past but suppressed; and in place thereof rais up the name Covenanters, Anti-covenanters, Croce covenanters, Puritanes, Babarters, Rounheids, Auldhornes, Newhornes, Croce Petitioneris, Brownists, Separatists, Malignants, Sectaries, Royalists, Quakeris, Anababtistes."—*Nicoll's Diary*, ann. 1650.

[10] Statistics do not bear this out. See Peterkin, p. 626, where an extract is given from the records of the Presbytery of Perth (March, 1649): "List of the families wherein some of them can read, within the parishes following: Scone 25, Drone 36, Dumbarny 55, St. Madoes 9, Rund 25, Kinnoull 18, St. Martins 13, Ragarton 9, Arngask 16, Abernethy 100."

Scriptures, and were provided of Bibles, either by the parents or their ministers. Every minister was a very full professor of the reformed religion according to the large confession of faith. Every minister was obliged to preach thrice a week, to lecture and catechise once, besides other private duties wherein they abounded . . . And among them were many holy in conversation and eminent in gifts. Indeed, in many places the spirit seemed to be poured out with the word. I have lived in many years in a paroch where I never heard ane oath; and you might have ridden many miles before you had heard any: Also, you could not for a great part of the country have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing, and public prayer.

"Now in the midst of this deep tranquillity, as soon as the certainty of the king's return arrived in Scotland, I believe there was never accident in the world altered the disposition of a people more than that did the Scottish nation. Sober men observed, it not only inebriated but

really intoxicated, and made people not only drunk but frantic; men did not think they could handsomely express their joy, except they turned brutes for debauch, revels and pageants. Yea, many a sober man was tempted to exceed."

The last paragraph is the refutation of what goes before. If the religious condition was all that Kirkton paints it, then it is inconceivable that the mere restoration of the monarchy can have so prejudicially affected it. Court influences may be powerful, but they can hardly alter the social and religious conditions of a nation in a day. At the Restoration the King, as the phrase went, "came to his own"; and the people rejoiced not merely from sentimental and altruistic considerations, but because they felt they too were coming to an "own" of which the reign of a gloomy fanaticism had defrauded them. In Scotland the people were tired of the surveillance by the elder and the kirk session, and they hailed what seemed to promise relief. It was regrettable, but

inevitable that they should push liberty to licence.

The Cromwellian regime in Scotland brought English and Scottish puritanism face to face; already their representatives had conferred together in the Westminster Assembly, not entirely to their mutual satisfaction, as the *Letters* of Baillie, who was one of the Scottish Commissioners, make clear. They were bound together by the Solemn League and Covenant; England had wished for a civil league, and adopted the religious bond because Scotland made its acceptance a condition of any treaty whatever. They had a common Confession of Faith, and in name at least the same form of Church government; but Presbytery never commended itself to the English genius, and never really took root in English soil. English and Scottish puritanism had many points of difference. Sprung from the same root, both rejecting episcopacy, they were yet in other matters strongly opposed. In England the Independents were strong, and their principles governed the whole mass.

The Independent theory was, and is, that the congregation is the Church; each local congregation therefore orders its own government, doctrine and worship as it judges proper, and with such a theory there is necessarily associated the idea of toleration.[11]

The Scottish Presbyterians cherished totally different ideals; they realised their national responsibility, their responsibility for every individual soul within the nation. They refused to contemplate the possibility of "any other face of Kirk" within the realm.[12] Without exactly knowing it, the ministers were the highest of high Churchmen, claiming for themselves in practice a much higher role than that of mere "teaching elders." Accordingly, General Assemblies, up to their suppression

[11] It is not to be supposed, however, that toleration as we understand it was either the theory or the practice of the Puritan Independents. When they had power they did not show themselves tolerant. In 1645 the use of the Book of Common Prayer (already forbidden in churches) was forbidden in families; copies of the book were to be given up, and heavy penalties were imposed on any who should retain them.

[12] It has been maintained that this repudiation applied only to the Romish Church, but this is clearly not the case.

by Cromwell in 1652, and during that suppression, by representative spokesmen, while inveighing against "Malignancy" on the one hand, were not less uncompromising in their denunciation of Schismatics, Brownists and Sectaries on the other.[13]

They were led to this, not only because they conceived their doctrine to be the absolute truth of God and their system of church government the divinely appointed one, but also because with a true instinct they recognised that the best and indeed the only guarantee for the preservation of sound doctrine and orderly worship is offered by a

[13] "That prevailing party of Sectaries in England, who have broken the Covenant and despised the Oath of God, corrupted the truth, subverted the fundamentall Government by King and Parliament, and taken away the King's life, look upon us with an evill eye, as upon these who stand in the way of their monstrous and new-fangled devices in Religion and Government: And though there were no cause to fear anything from that party but the Gangrene and infection of those damnable and abominable errours which have taken hold on them, yet our vicinity unto and daily commerce with that nation may justly make us afraid that the Lord may give up many in this Land unto a spirit of delusion to believe lies, because they have not received to love of the truth." —*A Seasonable and Necessary Warning . . . from the General Assembly, Dec., 1649.*

Church, understanding by that term an organised body of local congregations all subject to the corporate jurisdiction. The size and distribution of a Church secure it from passing and local fluctuations of feelings and from the extravagances of individuals. It was therefore in the nature of things improbable that English Puritanism, so officially powerful, should be able greatly to affect the character of Scottish ecclesiasticism; and the desertion of the Covenant, of which the English people were held to be guilty, as well as the fact that they were invaders, operated in the same direction. Cromwell's Government was never popular, and the public prayers for the king, in which the ministers persisted, were as much a protest against Cromwellianism as a tribute of loyalty to the Stuarts. Individual defections there no doubt were to the ranks of Quakers and Anabaptists, but these had no national importance.

Very different it was with the next turn of the political wheel. Charles II. returned to occupy the throne in 1660. He had been

crowned in Scotland immediately on his father's death, and had subscribed the Covenant. Now he issued a proclamation that he would preserve the government of the Church as established by law. But events were to show that the promise was not what it seemed to be. The Church itself was guilty of a serious error in tactics. The Protesters met under the presidency of James Guthrie, and adopted a supplication to the King, in which they asked him to extirpate Popery, Prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism, profaneness, and everything contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness; to fill places of trust, not only in Scotland but also in England and Ireland, with those who had taken the Covenant, and were of known affection to the cause of God; and by taking away the ceremonies and service book from his own chapel and family and other places of his dominions to remove the beginnings of stumbling that had already been occasioned.

Nothing could have been more injudicious or ill-timed. The King had been restored to

his kingdom, and would have been less than human if he had not been touched by and grateful for the extraordinary outburst of loyalty and devotion which everywhere met him. So far as can be judged, he was anxious to justify the people's choice of him, and to do his duty by all subjects; and here, on the very threshold of his kingship, he was met with this petition inviting him to tie himself to one small party in the state, and to be in their hands the instrument of bigotry. The petition and the names attached to it must have recalled old and none too pleasant memories—memories of the day, nine years before, when he had been crowned in Scone,[14]

[14] "This day we have done what I earnestly desired and long expected, crowned our noble King with all the Solemnities at Scone. . . . Mr. Douglas from 2 Kings xi., Joash's Coronation, had a very pertinant, wise and good sermon. The King sware the Covenant, the League and Covenant, the Coronation Oath. When Argyle put on the crown, Mr. Douglas prayed well: when the Chancellor set him on the throne he exhorted well: when all were ended, he, with great earnestness pressed sincerity and constancy in the covenant on the King, delating at length King James's breach of the covenant pursued yet against the family, from Neh. v. 13—God's casting the King out of his lap, and the 34th Jeremiah, many plagues on him if he did not sincerely keep the oathes now taken. He closed all with a prayer and the 20th Psalm."—*Baillie's Letters*, 1651.

but preached at, lectured, warned and exhorted in words and tones such as kings can hardly be expected to love; of how he had been compelled to subscribe a Covenant with which he had no manner of sympathy;[15] of how friends and trusted councillors had been ordered from his side,[16] and his private domestic arrangements prescribed for him by pharisaic ministers.

[15] "The Lord hath been deceaved and ensnared by his (the King's) refussing to seinge the declaration offered to him untill he was necessitated and untill in a kynd it was extorted from him."—*Remonstrance of the Gentlemen, etc., in the West*, 1650.

[16] "Sept. 27, 1650.—The Committee of Estaits considering the necessary duty lying upon them in prosecution of the Act of Parliament and according to the frequent and serious remonstrances by the Commission of the Church for purging of the King's family of all profane, scandalous, malignant and disaffected persons, and that it be constituted of such as are pious and well affected towards the cause and covenant, who have not opposed the same by their counsels and actions. And likewise considering the great offence that has been taken that the persons after nominated have not removed from the court, nor departed out of the kingdom respectively, and having taken also into consideration the report of the sub-committee appointed to think on the purging of the King's family—doth hereby therefore ordain and command the French Marquese Villàneuffe; the Earle of Cleveland; Lord Wentworth, his son; Viscount Grandison; Lord Volmeet; Lord Witherington; Robert Longe, Secretary; Sir Edward Walker, Quarter; Mr. Progers, Groome of his Majesty's bedchamber; Master Lane; Master Marche; Colonel Darcy; Mr. Antony Jackson; Major Jackson; Co. Lees; Sir Philip Musgrave; Sir

Charles II. has been charged with perfidy and ingratitude; there is some ground for the first accusation; there is none for the second. He had nothing to be grateful for to the Protesters, who had inflicted on him numberless humiliations and petty slights, which things men are less ready to forgive than great wrongs. There is a lack of historic imagination in those who charge Charles II. with

Faithfull Fortskew (etc., etc.)—To depart the Court within 24 hours and to remove out of the kingdom within 20 days after intimation; and Dr. Fraser and Sir James Melvill to withdraw from the Court within 24 hours. And to the effect that the persons foresaid may not pretend ignorance hereof, the Committee ordains Sir James Balfour of Kinnaird, Knight, His Majesty's Lion King at Arms, to make due and speedy intimation hereof, commanding Sir Jo. Brown, Col., and the officers of foot of His Majesty's Life Guards to put this present Act into execution.

"I received this letter at my house of Kinnaird about nine o'clock in the morning on Thursday the 3rd of October, and was at Perth about 12 o'clock the same day; and after I had kissed his Majesty's hand, I show him my message. He desired me to forbear making intimation to nine of them which he marked with a long score on the roll, until he spoke with the Lord Chancellor, to whom and the Committee he had written to spare these until the sitting down of the Parliament, and desired me to go on with the rest. That same night at nine at night the Lord Chancellor came to Perth and spoke with the King on Friday morning, and brought him a letter from the Committee on Estaits containing an absolute refusal to suffer any of those persons sent to me in the list, to stay about his person or court. So I went on and made intimation to all."—Balfour, *Annales*. 1650.

ingratitude at this time. No one who honestly tries to put himself in the King's position, and to realise how he himself would feel in such circumstances, will fail to recognise that Charles had abundant excuses, if not reasons, for his conduct. That the Supplication was largely responsible for what followed is more than probable. The Scottish Parliament, on hearing of what had been done, arrested and imprisoned those concerned. Unauthorised meetings were forbidden. Rutherford's *Lex Rex* and Guthrie's *Causes of God's Wrath* were called in and burned. Parliament proceeded with feverish loyalty. The King was declared to be supreme over all persons and all causes ecclesiastical and civil. By the Rescissory Act all legislation subsequent to 1633 was repealed, and thus at one stroke the whole fabric of Presbyterianism, so laboriously reared, was laid in ruins. The real meaning of the King's promise was now apparent. He had promised to preserve the Kirk as by law established, and this had been naturally and legitimately understood as an undertaking to

preserve the Presbyterian constitution; but the sweeping from the Statute Book of all the laws by which that constitution had been secured completely altered the position. The Church "as established by law" came by this enactment to mean the Church as it was in 1633, and in 1633 the Church had been episcopal. It was in one sense a clever stroke, but, as unscrupulous cleverness often does, it proved to be a blunder. Once again the Canterburian Party wrecked their chance by precipitancy. Charles II. and James Sharp made the same mistake that Charles I. and Laud made in 1637. In August of 1663 the King announced his intention to restore government by bishops in the Scottish Church. In due time the announcement was carried into effect, and James Sharp, minister of Crail, the trusted agent in London of the cause of presbytery, was consecrated Archbishop of St. Andrews and Primate of all Scotland. Nothing whatever was done to conciliate possible opposition or to mollify in any way the bitterness of the draught, though it is doubtful whether

any suavity in method would have made the innovation acceptable to the Scottish people. On the contrary, the measure was accompanied and followed by provocations as uncalled for as they were unwise. Whom the gods wish to destroy they first infatuate. Accordingly, it was enacted that ministers admitted in or subsequent to 1649 were to be no longer entitled to remain in their benefices unless they sought readmission at the hands of their patron and bishop. No doubt this was exactly the same measure as the Presbyterians had meted out to the bishops in 1580; but reprisals are not always good statesmanship. The result was immediate; over 300 ministers refused to comply with the terms imposed, and quitted their charges and emoluments rather than yield. Their places were filled by men whose merits were dubious and whose unpopularity was soon made manifest. The congregations, without exception, adhered to their former ministers, and met to hear them where they could. New edicts were issued by the Government forbidding such assemblies as

unlawful conventicles, and ordaining parishioners to attend their parish churches under penalty of fine and imprisonment; such conventicles as were held were, when discovered, broken up by armed force; resistance and revolt were provoked, and Scotland was plunged into the chaos, cruelty and persecution which make the dark page of history known as the "killing times."

Into that story we do not propose to enter. It has been told from every point of view, but seldom with entire impartiality. Our business with it here is simply to find out the influence of that persecution on the puritan development, and this may be summed up in one sentence: conflict, as conflict always does, made the extremists still more extreme.

Reference has already been made to the verdict of one writer that the Covenanters were in the main incontestibly right; and that, no doubt, is the popular view in Scotland; but that a view is popular is no guarantee of its being correct. A good deal depends upon what is meant by the qualification, "in the

main." If it means that the Covenanters were sincere and conscientious, and were right in doing what they believed to be right, then the truth of the verdict as a general proposition must be admitted. Saul of Tarsus was right when he persecuted the Church of Christ, inasmuch as he was conscientious in so doing. But rightness surely means more than this. There is an objective standard by which both human conceptions and actions must be judged. If what is meant be that the Covenanters were really in possession of the truth in thinking that their Calvinistic theology was the gospel as preached by its Founder, and that presbyterian church order is the only one acceptable to God, then the verdict is not one that can be justified. The question is complicated by the inclusion in it of diverse elements. The Covenanters represented a national cause against the foreigner, and in so doing they appeal strongly to Scottish sympathies even to-day. They were out for what in modern phrase is called "self-determination"; they were contending for liberty to

worship God in their own fashion. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose that liberty of conscience would have fared any better in their hands, if they had won, than it fared in the hands of their persecutors. The Covenanters might not have relied, as their opponents did, on the sword and gibbet as instruments of conversion, though even this cannot be confidently affirmed; but there are other methods of oppression not less hateful and hardly more tolerable which they would certainly have employed.

The episcopal party in their persecution were for the most part without the excuse of religious bigotry. They were reminded by the Scottish Assembly that, on their own admission, prelacy was but a human ordinance introduced by human reason and settled by human law. Indeed, it is apparent on the face of it that what angered the persecutors and drove them to new measures of cruelty was their inability to understand why people should lay such stress on matters which were of no real importance; and being unable to understand

the point of view of their opponents, they set it down to stubbornness and rebellion, and dealt with it as such. The persecution was in fact political far more than religious: Claverhouse and his dragoons were simply, in their own view and in that of their superiors, engaged in enforcing obedience to the King and constitution.

# CHAPTER V

# THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT

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Persecution tends to defend itself. It stirs up that spirit in the persecuted which in a good cause we call constancy, and in a bad cause obstinacy, but which, in whatever cause, is the same primary human instinct, the resistance of the ego to the invasion of its domain. Persecution also tends to defeat itself by exciting compassion on behalf of the persecuted, and compassion paves the way for sympathy. Patrick Hamilton was burned at the stake at the beginning of the Scottish Reformation, to deter others from like error; but, as the saying went, the smoke of his burning infected all that it blew upon. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church. The twenty years of episcopal ascendancy beginning in 1610, with its mild persecution

of Presbyterianism, paved the way for the ecclesiastical resolution of 1638, when the Second Reformation signalised the triumph of the Presbyterian cause. Similarly the severe persecution filling the entire reigns of Charles II. and James VII., when the Covenanters were hunted over broad Scotland, was so far from extirpating the system obnoxious to it, that it left it really stronger than ever, as being more deeply rooted in Scottish affections. Accordingly, when the Stuart dynasty fell in the Revolution of 1688, the episcopacy which they had instituted and bolstered up fell also. Scotland was in no mood to discuss dispassionately the respective merits of episcopal and presbyterian church-government. The former, in their experience, was associated with compulsion, imprisonment, and torture, its agents were the dragoon and the executioner; it had made itself hateful. Persecution and the heroism of the persecuted which have enshrined those gloomy and unamiable religionists, our covenanting forefathers, in the affections of their posterity.

No doubt, while episcopacy lasted, and was able to assert itself, backed by the strong arm of the military and the law courts, it did achieve what appeared to be a measure of outward success. The open resisters in the fields and mosses were a mere remnant; only the stalwarts cared to persist in a course which exposed them to ruinous fines, imprisonment, or death; but as soon as the power dropped from the hands of the oppressors, and the people of Scotland were left to decide the issue for themselves, their true sentiments were made manifest. In August, 1688, Prince William of Orange landed in Scotland, and South and West, the people rose. Bands were formed, which scoured the country and drove from the manses the curates and their families. It was an early winter, but the unhappy curates were turned out of house and home without compunction. Popular resentment against them was increased by the fact that the curates had been compelled to keep rolls of their parishioners, with lists of the defaulters from public worship in the parish church, and

to report the latter for punishment. Parliament, when it met later, recognised the force of the popular sentiment, and legalised those tumultuous and violent ejections. It is probable that the new King would himself have preferred the unification of the English and Scottish ecclesiastical systems; but on grounds of public policy and political prudence he left the people of Scotland to decide the character of their national Church. It was a sad defection from the high ground of the Covenant, according to which presbytery was entitled to be settled, not on considerations of policy and expediency, but on its scriptural authority and divine institution, and the sterner Covenanters, as represented by the Cameronians, denounced the settlement as an unworthy compromise. In fact, in the Assembly debates the Covenant was not so much as mentioned, which is clear proof that the old enthusiasm had passed away. "The Covenant so potent in Scottish history, the chosen and sacred instrument of the theocrats, by which society was to be reorganised on a

heavenly model, having served its day and generation, was gathered to its fathers."

Nevertheless, the Church of Scotland was still puritan enough, and until well on in the eighteenth century, in some districts even to the nineteenth century, it exhibited all the familiar puritanic characteristics. Strictness in the terms of communion is of the very essence of puritanism: the Lord's people are to be a peculiar people. Out of this requirement arose the stern discipline of supervision and correction with all its penal machinery.

Of this discipline the chief instrument was the kirk-session, which played so important a part in the ecclesiastical history of Scotland. Kirk-sessions came into being almost with the Reformation. In *The First Book of Discipline* (1560) provision is made for elders, who are to assist the ministers in the public affairs of the Church. At first the term of appointment was one year, and although reappointment might be made, it was rather discouraged as setting up superiorities in the Kirk—probably, also, as tending to lessen ministerial autocracy. In

*The Second Book of Discipline* the appointment is for life; resignation appears to be forbidden —"Elders anis lauchfillie callit to the office may not leave it again." In the same book the eldership is declared to be a spiritual ministry. The ministers and elders were regarded as of the same order, though with different functions. Knox and Melville, especially the latter, in harmony with the reformed doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, aimed at removing, in theory at least, the distinction between lay and clerical, but in effect the distinction of function amounted to a difference in orders. The lay elder, chosen for his gravity, and generally also for his social position and influence, was not required to give up his calling, but merely to give his spare time to the Church. The elders, meeting under the presidency of the minister, formed a court of morals in the parish, affixing censures and exercising discipline. By the Statute of 1592, kirk-sessions were recognised as an integral part of the Church, and their jurisdiction was confirmed;

while by the Act of 1690 the government of the Kirk is declared to be by Kirk-Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies. From the first, kirk-sessions displayed great activity in the exercise of their large powers, and from time to time the General Assembly encouraged and exhorted them to diligence. Thus in 1648,[1] among the "Ecclesiastical Remedies against Prophaneness," it is ordained: "Let every elder have certain bounds assigned to him, that he may visit the same every month at least, and report to the Session what scandals and abuses are therein, or what persons have entered without testimonials: for further keeping of the Sabbath, let every elder take notice of such as are within his bounds, how they keep the kirk, how the time is spent betwixt and after the time of public worship." That the proceedings became both inquisitorial and tyrannical is abundantly proved by session records themselves. According to Buckle, "When the Scotch Kirk was at the height of its power, we

[1] See Assembly, 1649: Session 38.

may search history for any institution which can compete with it except the Spanish Inquisition," and he cites ample proof for his statement. The session inquired into all migrations into and out of the parish. They required newcomers to present testimonials of character from the minister of the parish from which they had come, and failing the production of these, residence within the bounds might be and often was forbidden, and the edict enforced, if necessary, by the civil power. Elders did not wait for scandals to be reported to them, they searched them out. They visited fairs and markets to hear if there was any swearing; they visited the houses to see if family worship was observed. Nothing was too great and no offence too petty for consideration. They took cognisance of murder and manslaughter, of theft and immorality and slander; they made the altercations of shrewish women the subject of solemn investigation and adjudication. They called to answer before them heads of families, lairds, and even elders, for entertaining company too

late at night in their houses; but especially were they ever on the outlook for Sabbath desecration. It sometimes happened that, owing to conflict of evidence or other causes, the session could not see its way to a judicial decision, and in such a case process might be sisted and the enquiry hung up until such time as God in His providence might be pleased to give further light. Cases are on record where the session waited, patiently or otherwise, thirty or forty years for light which came not, the accused person not condemned but not acquitted, lying under suspension from church privileges all the time. A way out of the difficulty in such cases was provided by the oath of purgation, a solemn declaration in which the suspected party affirmed his innocence. The sisting of process and the oath of purgation still remain the law of the Church. Sessions sometimes turned the oath to unintended uses for the expiscation of crimes or offences. Thus, in Galston, in 1635, "All the inhabitants of the Galstone being

summondit this day comperit and purgit themselves by their aith that nane of them tak nor knew who tak the daill (board) from ye Kirk." At first, and almost to the end of the seventeenth century, corporal pains and civil penalties followed upon ecclesiastical censure. Excommunication entailed as its consequence confiscation of property and even forfeiture of civil rights and the protection of the law, but by the settlement of 1690 the civil penalty was removed. Even after that date, however, sessions might and did remit contumacious offenders to the magistrate, and for convenience a bailie's commission was sometimes applied for and received by an elder designated therefor by the kirk-session. Without any civil penalty following on their judgments kirk-sessions were formidable in respect of their own powers. The culprit lying under censure, besides being debarred from church privileges, was ostracised; and anyone dealing or keeping company with the offender rendered himself liable to censure. Although the custom appears to have come in (protested against by

the Cameronians[2] in 1742) of dispensing with the usual publicities on payment of a money fine to be devoted to the poor, the only method as a rule by which censure could be removed was by public appearance as a penitent. The penitent, in sackcloth, sat on the stool or a pew reserved for the purpose, and after sermon was exhorted by the minister. It was seldom that the ordeal was passed in one day; three, four up to nine days, the penitent might be required to appear. In more serious cases the delinquent might be required, after a number of days of humiliation in his or her own church, to go the round of the neighbouring parishes as well. The power of sessions to enforce discipline is attested by the fact that, so late as 1786, Robert Burns, free-lance as he was and indisposed to brook authority, did penance in Mauchline church, although as a special indulgence he was allowed to receive the rebuke in his own pew instead of on the stool. Another

[2] In this protest the Cameronians were only continuing the policy of the early Assemblies, which had forbidden the mitigation of discipline in respect of money payments *etiamsi ad pios usus*.

characteristic of Scottish puritanism was the strictness of its view regarding the Sabbath. It has been said that the cult of the Sabbath was introduced into Scotland from England. If so, the learners speedily improved the lesson of their teachers in strictness of observance and requirement. English influence on this matter is probably overrated. Sabbatarianism appeared early in the Scottish Church. The use of the name Sabbath serves as an index, for the word brings its Hebrew connotation with it. In *The First Book of Discipline* the name Sabbath does not appear; the word used is Sunday. In 1562 the Assembly supplicated that "Sabbath breaking" be punished civilly; but in 1565 the name is still "Lord's Day." Again, in 1575 it is ordained that there be no clerk-plays on the Lord's day. In 1576 the Assembly claimed power to deal with violations of the Sabbath Day.

There had been great liberty allowed under the unreformed Church as to Sunday; then, as now, in the Church of Rome, people were free to spend the part of the day after Mass as

they chose. James VI., in his *Book of Sports*, indicated what recreations might be indulged in on Sunday with propriety. The Reformed ecclesiastical injunctions against running of mills, fishing, threshing, corn stacking on the Lord's Day appear to have had in view the fact that such occupations interfered with church attendance, quite as much as expressing any sabbatarian notions. In 1590 it was ordained that the Sabbath be not "prophaned," and that the presbyteries use their influence with gentlemen within their bounds to give a week-day to poor men "for shearing and winning of their corns," evidently as a means of removing temptation to Sunday labour. In the same year John Row tells us there was "great dealing with the Town Council of Edinburgh to stay the profanation of the Lord's Day by their Monday's market," on the ground that it entailed preparatory labours on the Sunday. But Row remarks, "This great evil was never remedied till this late happy reformation began in 1638." Thus right on from 1560 we can mark a steady growth in the

Sabbath idea. It has been said that the Sabbath was episcopal as much as presbyterian, but the statement needs severe qualification. In the episcopal intervals sentiment among the ministers was largely presbyterian. The growth in strictness of view synchronised with the episcopal-presbyterian conflict which marked the years 1610 to 1637. The Assembly of 1638 was sabbatarian with a new degree of intensity, and one of the sins specifically charged against the bishops was "break of the Sabbath Day."[3] During the covenanting persecution the Sabbath idea grew more and more strict, as is evident from the new impetus which the Judaic institution had received by 1690. From that time Sabbath breaking came to be considered as one of the two great sins to be wrestled with, and its suppression engrossed the kirk session's time and care,

[3] In the process against him in the Assembly of 1638 the Bishop of Moray was charged with being "a common rider on the Sabbath Day." It was also charged against him that "ryding from the Church on the Sunday morning he was desired to stay all night because it was the Sabbath Day. He answered that he would borrow that piece of the day from God and be as good to him some other gate."

while assemblies and presbyteries passed acts and overtures on the same subject. The pulpits resounded with denunciations and warnings against this sin. Elders scoured the streets, peeped through windows, and smuggled or forced themselves into houses and chambers to see how the holy day was kept; offenders being promptly "delated" to the session.

To "vaig" (to take a stroll), or to allow children to vaig; to be in the house during sermon; to serve ale or drink it with incomers; to play at the pennystone; to drive a cow along the road; to bake bread; sell milk, carry parcels, pull peas or stake them; to dig potatoes;[4] to subscribe a bond or legal document; to wash clothes, or even "almost to wash" yarn; to shave others, or be shaved; to look out of the window; to engage in worldly conversation, were all sins against the Sabbath, for which convictions and

[4] Gavin Hamilton was dealt with by the Session of Mauchline for ordering a servant to dig potatoes on Sunday for dinner. Hence the reference in *Holy Willie's Prayer*—

> "Curse Thou his basket and his store,
> Kail and potatoes."

punishments are recorded in the minutes of kirk sessions.[5] In 1785 a man was delated to the kirk session of Lumphanan for going to see his mother on the Sabbath, and carrying a stone of meal to her as a present; and refusing to acknowledge that he was in fault, he was excommunicated.[6] The public officials of Mauchline, the burgh bailie, the burgh clerk, treasurer and officer, were in 1706 summoned before the session, and ordered to be publicly rebuked in the church for having attested a soldier on the Lord's Day. The magistrates in vain tried to escape with a private rebuke; they had to appear in church on Sunday, and there to acknowledge their transgression, and promise not to offend again.[7]

Congregations were enlisted in the crusade, heads of families being particularly enjoined to report any cases of delinquency coming under their observation. Even well into the nineteenth century it was the custom among the

[5] *Old Church Life in Scotland.* Edgar, pp. 234 *sqq.*

[6] *Ib.*, p. 354.

[7] *Ib.*, p. 357.

more rigidly pious to keep the window blinds drawn during the whole of Sunday. With 1843 there came a recrudescence in the Free Church of rigorous sabbatarianism. People would put their potatoes in sand in the kitchen oven on Saturday night, so that they might cook themselves on the sacred day. Not many years ago, it was announced by an elder in a General Assembly that he had discovered a plan by which Sabbath milking of cows might be dispensed with, without injury to the animals. Similar sanctity was attached to Fast days, whether the regular pre-communion fast or a specially appointed day. Works of necessity and mercy were cut down to the smallest proportions. The day was to be wholly spent in religious exercises, hearing of sermon, and, after that was over, writing down the heads of the sermon, meditating on it, catechising the members of the household upon it, prayer, Bible reading, and reading of godly books filled up the day. Those who expressed themselves as feeling the day so spent to be tedious and burdensome were asked how they

expected to be able to support the eternal Sabbath of Heaven.

Another and allied characteristic of Scottish puritanism was its gloom. By no stretch of language could the gospel as it was presented be called good news which the people would hear gladly. It was a message of threatening and terror. In the doctrinal scheme grace, election, Heaven, have as their correlatives wrath, reprobation, hell. With God at one end of the scale, there comes, by the implication of contrast, Satan at the other. In the preaching of the early eighteenth century the ugly correlatives were insisted upon: they were the "hangman's whip," as Burns phrased it, which served to drive the people where they could not be led. The malignity, ubiquity, and potency of the devil, and the awful torments of the lost, were the themes upon which popular preachers expatiated. Every natural affection was discouraged and repressed. People were told that when in Heaven they would regard with equanimity, and even with satisfaction, the

torments of their parents or children or friends in hell fire, as being the vindication of God's righteous judgement.

No doubt sermons lend themselves to exaggeration, and are discounted by those who hear them. The pulpit utterances of any age can hardly be taken as an accurate index of the state of thought at the time. Even the preacher hardly expects to be taken literally. Still, making all allowance for individual eccentricities and the tendency of extreme utterances to be remembered while the more sober are forgotten, it is safe to say that in the age of which we are speaking many prophets prophesied wrath and terror, and there were many who loved to have it so; for horror has its fascinations.

In tracing the course of this long puritan development, reference has already been made to the negative element so largely prevalent in the Scottish Reformation. It was a violently anti-Roman movement, and the inertia of motion, the momentum of the process persisted. The extremists became more extreme, shedding

in their march the more moderate elements, and developing, through opposition to them, a fiercer extremism. Thus the movement progressed through Protestant, Presbyterian, Protester, Covenanter, and Cameronian. But the need was soon felt of something positive, and this was found in the Hebraism of the Old Testament. The Bible had come with all the power of a new discovery to the Reformers. Its reality, its simplicity, its clean wholesomeness, its reasonableness in the presentment of religion, stood out in sharpest contrast with the mummeries and hocus-pocus of mediævalism. In the churches in England, where the Bible was read in English on week-days, crowds gathered, and hung entranced upon the reader's lips.

To the Bible, then, the Reformers turned as the thing to fill the blank left by the dethronement of the authority of the Pope and the Church. The Bible was made an idol of; it was worshipped; to have hinted at criticism of it would have been regarded as blasphemy. Now, even a child in a Sunday School knows

that there is progress and development in the Bible, and that the New Testament marks an advance upon the Old; but such ideas were foreign to preachers and teachers in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. According to the *First Book of Discipline* the gospel is contained in the law and histories of the Old Testament.[8] Gradually the emphasis came to be laid upon the Old Testament, partly, no doubt, because it may be taken as authorising many things which could not be so easily justified out of the New Testament. Andrew Melville, when challenged for his plain speaking about the king, threw down the Hebrew Bible on the table, and said that these were his instruments, that is to say, his defences and pleas in law. The ministers having disclaimed authority as priests, reclaimed it as prophets of the Old Testament order, and if they did not claim for themselves predictive powers, these were claimed for

[8] This is an old view. Gregory of Tours affirms that Abraham, Moses, Aaron, and David all intimate their faith in the Doctrine of the Trinity. See *History of Morals*. Lecky, II., p. 242.

them by their followers and admirers. Row cites a number of instances of prophesy by Knox. Shields says that the Reformers used to justify their intervention in civil and public affairs by the precedents of the Hebrew prophets.

The Old Testament penalty of death for adultery and witchcraft, for cursers of father or mother, idolaters and blasphemers, was retained as the law of God. Can God change? they asked; if He said so once, must He not say so still! It did not occur to them that there might be progress in man's knowledge of God. Knox defends Jewish barbarities in war, the extermination of conquered peoples, by asking: If God commanded it, is it not right? Shields, who is a most authoritative exponent of the covenanting mind, justifies his reliance upon the Jewish scriptures on the ground that, though the New Testament does not enjoin assassination, revenge and hatred, it adopts them by its silence. In one place he makes a valiant effort to find in the Lord's Prayer (Thy kingdom come) authority for

resisting, if necessary by assassination, the tyrant's claims.

The predilection of Shields for the Old Testament is remarkable in one who was a Christian preacher. Opening his book, *A Hind Let Loose*, at random, and noting the textual references, the following were the results :—

Page 386—Seventeen Old Testament references : New Testament references, none.

Page 277—Twelve Old Testament references : New Testament, none.

In the latter page he is claiming for elders the fullest powers of life and death, cognoscing of crimes, making and unmaking of kings ; for which the New Testament can hardly be appealed to. In the title-page, where four texts are quoted as mottoes or sub-titles, three are from the Old Testament, and the fourth from the Apocalypse.

It was in the Hebrew Scriptures that the Covenanters found their Sabbath and their Fast day, their covenant, their intolerance and

pharisaism. Here, too, let us in justice add, they found their love of righteousness and that passionate devotion to the will of God, as they conceived it, which shines through all their errors, and made them the heroic men they were.

Puritanism was the true child of tempest; conceived by protest, born of opposition and nourished by conflict, it drew strength and inspiration from difficulties and dangers: but when the conditions to which it owed its being, and in which it throve, ceased, it itself began to languish and fade. As with Hannibal's soldiers, its Capua was its undoing. It was like a spring which, powerful when compressed, is powerless when released from pressure. Essentially martial and combative, it was braced to its highest pitch of heroic vigour by persecution; after the killing times it steadily decayed. In 1690 the seeds of dissolution were germinating, and the process of their growth and fructification can be clearly traced through the eighteenth century. The episcopal incumbents, whom the Revolution

Settlement had left undisturbed in their parishes, may or may not have been the source from which the new "band of Moderates" sprung: in any case, Moderates did appear among ministers, and the revival of patronage under Queen Anne operated to their encouragement and increase. Instead of the trumpet blasts against the Roman and Episcopal antichrist which had been the chief products in an earlier age of ministers' literary activity, there began to issue from the manses of Scotland essays in history, philosophy, and even the drama. The new departure marked a totally changed outlook and field of interest. The Moderates were no doubt, many of them, excellent Christians, but no one would claim for them that they were consumed by zeal for either evangelical theology or presbyterian polity, and that this new temper was the prevailing temper is proved by the fact that on one ground or another the more puritan elements were shed in secessions from the Established Church. Among the people a parallel movement went on. The union of the

Parliaments meant the removal of Scotland's old isolation. New avenues were opened for trade and commerce, and that material world, which, according to Heine, puritanism had delivered over to the devil, and which it had at least relegated to a very inferior place, reasserted its claim, and had its claim allowed. The minds of men ceased to occupy themselves, as they had done before almost exclusively, with theological and ecclesiastical questions: a whole new world broke fascinatingly upon the Scottish perception.

Puritanism in the old sense is gone: it may win its resurrection, though this is unlikely: meantime, it is as dead as Pan. Formally and nominally, its traditions are feebly preserved by the two smallest denominations in Scottish Presbyterianism, which have their only hold in the Highlands, and even there will soon become an anachronism. In other quarters it is sometimes belauded by those who would have received the shortest of shrifts under the *regime* of which they make themselves the champions.

Nevertheless, Scotland's debt to our puritan forefathers is very great. The manner of puritanism's decease, so different in Scotland from what it was in England, made it a much more abiding influence here than there. In England Puritanism died suddenly and tragically in the violent reaction which attended the Restoration. In Scotland it passed away gradually, ebbing as the tide ebbs when the flood has spent its power: and this gradual recession gave time for a rich deposit to be left. It has been pointed out by Mr Lecky, the historian of morals, that Protestantism is favourable to the development of the masculine virtues, while the Roman Catholic faith favours the growth of the gentler graces; and what is true of Protestantism is *a fortiori* true of that accentuated form of protestantism called puritanism. Among protagonists of presbytery in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are to be found many strong men, but they were of the order who strive and cry and cause their voices to be heard in the streets: so far as the public records go there was a notable absence

of that particular type to which we apply the name of saint. That Samuel Rutherford should be cited as a saint can be due only to misconception of the meaning of the term or to want of acquaintance of the character and life of the man. He was emotional, ecstatic, and fanatic, but that serenity which marks the saint was entirely foreign to his nature. Leighton was the nearest approach to a saint of all those whom we see in those centuries of conflict, and he was the consecrated bishop of Dunblane. But in the masculine virtues Scotsmen are not deficient, and something at least of its strength, and something also of its dourness, the Scottish character owes to those doughty ancestors who never turned their backs on any danger, but marched breast-forward in all the storm and stress through which the path lay for them. They fought a good fight, and are entered into their rest. They laboured, and we have entered into their labours. It is easy now to criticise Puritanism, to point out where it exceeded, and in what it fell short. We can take our ease now in Zion, we can afford to

sing the praises of tolerance; but it was not always so. A stern battle had to be fought, and tolerance and philosophic doubt and the power to see good in our enemies and force in their arguments, are not the qualities which enable men to be martyrs and heroes. It was just because the Puritans were free from these enervating virtues that they fought and flinched not.

Fighting against the sins of grossness and materialism Puritanism fell into the Manichæan error, which holds sin to be inherent in the flesh, but it witnessed to the great truth that if we would be free we must conquer our affections and lusts. It cast its doctrine into forms rigid and inflexible; it counted for absolute and eternal truth what time which tries all things has not approved, but even its extravagances are an abiding testimony to the inadequacy of a vague religiosity, and the need for men of a standard of objective truth both as regards thought and conduct.

Puritanism was a necessary stage in human progress, one of the many ways in which God has fulfilled Himself.

# CHAPTER VI

# THE AFTERMATH

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Leaving out of account the indirect results of Puritanism, the unintended contributions made by it as by-products to the stock of Scottish mental and spiritual habitudes—and these were both real and important,—its deliberate and definite bequests to Scottish religion were three; a theology, an order of Church worship, and a form of Church government. The theology was Calvinism, which is still the official creed of the Church; for the Calvinistic Confession of Faith stands unchanged. But while this is so, the Declaration of Adherence to the Confession required from ministers and elders has been so relaxed in its terms as to make the contents of the creed of much less moment than they were. All that is required of the subscriber is an avowal of belief in "the

fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the Confession." The studied vagueness and ambiguity of the Declaration are obvious; it would be hard to say to what it binds or from what it releases. The relief afforded is only to conscience: in any trial for heresy the person on trial would be judged by the Confession of Faith itself. There is, no doubt, a seeming lack of courage and ingenuousness in thus evading the difficulty instead of meeting it; but it is perhaps the only method feasible. Attempts have been made before and in other Churches to define fundamental doctrines without much success. Such discussions as must emerge would be hazardous for the peace of the Church. The relaxing of the formula of subscription is a clear indication that Calvinism has ceased to be the real, though it continues to be the nominal and official creed of Scotland.

For all this, Calvinism has still its strenuous apologists, although when the apologies are examined it will be found that at the best they amount to only a very partial vindication of

the Genevan system. To say that Calvinism "entered like iron into the blood of nascent Protestantism," or that "it produced excellent ethical results," or again, that it "avoids the Pantheism which would rob us of ourselves and the Deism which would rob us of God," are propositions which may be true enough, but would hardly have satisfied Calvin; they are apologetic in the ordinary as distinguished from the technical sense of that word. Calvin did not intend his system to be a tonic; he offered it as an exposition of the ways of God to men, and it was so interpreted by Scottish Churchmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What that interpretation was we have already seen in Mr. Andrew Dickson's "cleareing and exponeing" of the case against Arminianism in the Assembly of 1638; but even at the risk of repetition it is worth while looking at the matter in some detail.

In attempting to explain the universe, and more particularly that department of it which is Man, human thought has oscillated between two theories, the Pantheistic and the Deistic.

Pantheism makes God the only real; so that all existences are but modes of His being, and all the facts and phenomena of human consciousness irridescences of the divine intelligence. Such an explanation would occur to no one but a philosopher: it is open to the objection that it appears to be fatal to morality by abolishing the difference between good and evil: it is also in contradiction to that instinctive sense of free-will and responsibility which deserves to be regarded as of axiomatic authority.

Deism makes God the spectator of a process which He is unable or unwilling to control. Such a conception accords with at least the superficial appearances of things, and it has consequently found favour as satisfying the conditions. In the world we see an order rational and beneficent in the main, but subject to invasions of what to the ordinary man seems to be unnecessary and unkind, as if the Deity in His Atlas-task staggered sometimes and stumbled under the burden of the universe, as if in the campaign, victorious on

the whole, He had to suffer local and temporary defeats. It may be said that such a view "robs us of God," but this means no more than that it robs us of the sort of God we would like to have; and the truth of things is not always answerable to our desire. Nor is Deism irreconcilable with the special and characteristic doctrines of Christianity; these can be grafted on to it quite well, for the whole Christian scheme as generally understood is not only not inconsistent with the theory of a labouring and struggling God beset with difficulties, and hampered and hindered by opposing forces, but it actually suggests and even logically requires such a conception of the Divine.

Deism is not without its inspiring effect. It is noteworthy that Paul, champion as he is for an Omnipotence and Omnipresence which are not easily distinguishable from Pantheism, yet abandons this ground in his moral appeals, when he calls men to range themselves upon the side of a God who needs their help.

Calvinism is an attempt to steer a middle

course between the Pantheistic and Deistic theories. As against Deism with its limited monarchy, it affirms the absolute sovereignty of God, making Him the all-in-all in creation, providence and grace. He is the author of all good in us; He is the potter and we are the clay; He works in us both to will and to do. The awkward consequence that this would make the Deity, by act or by default, the author of evil, is evaded by the expedient of Satan; although this manifestly only pushes the difficulty as to the origin of evil a step further back. An elaborate machinery is pressed into the service to account for the present position of things—the Devil, the fall, inherited guilt, original sin, the eternal decrees, covenants, pre-destination, election. Man was created upright, and with power to preserve his uprightness, but by his act of disobedience involved himself and his posterity in the curse, part of which was the forfeiture of free-will and an irresistible bias towards evil. But as all this had been fore-known and fore-ordained, so also it had been provided for.

In the Council held in eternity before the world was, a plan had been evolved. In consideration of Christ consenting to become man, and to have men's sins imputed to Him, and by death upon the Cross paying the penalty due by men to offended justice, the Father agreed to give to Christ as His reward a certain specified number, called the elect, to whom the meritorious act of Christ should be imputed; the Third Person in the Trinity undertook the sanctification and perfecting in holiness of those thus elected to salvation. The residue of mankind, as non-elect or reprobate, were fore-ordained to perdition.

In this scheme pre-destination is the master-word. God decrees all things, determining the destinies of all mankind, appointing of His good pleasure some to endless bliss and the rest to endless woe. The elect must be saved, and the whole process of justification, sanctification, and glorification completed in them, while the non-elect cannot be saved, and even the things which they may do in conformity with God's commands are sinful, as being acts of those remaining under the curse.

Thus man is represented as being not only passive but helpless. The objection of harshness towards the non-elect is met by the assertion that the election of any being an act of free and unmerited mercy on the part of God, those cannot complain who do not receive a favour to which they can plead no title.

Such in brief outline is the Calvinistic scheme; and, thus stated, it has an invincible air of unreality, as of a lawyer's device to establish a case, which on the face of it is not reasonable. It does not attract, but rather repels. The power of attraction which, nevertheless, this system did possess for masses of men, and the mastery which it established over them, are due to the fact that the bare principles enunciated were concealed by a vesture which human piety, gratitude, and affection, excited by the willing death of Christ, flung over the whole; just as a gibbet, standing in the open air, and left to itself and nature, might have its ghastliness covered and beautified by the growth over it of leafage and

flower. It was probably this system which Wendel Holmes had in his mind when he said that there were some theologies which a man ought not to be able to believe and yet retain his reason. The logical outcome of this theology would appear to be fatalism, alternating in the minds of those who accept it between assurance and despair, according as they have the sense of election or reprobation. That it did not uniformly or even largely produce this result is due to what has been called the invincible self-complacency of mankind, but should rather be called the instinctive and well-grounded consciousness in the individual that God could never so deal with him as to pre-destinate him to eternal woe; for it is one thing to admit a general proposition and another thing to conceive of it as applying in one's own particular case. Antinomianism it did beget.

As against Pantheism, Calvinism asserts the personality of God, but here the term personality as applied to God turns out to be something quite different from that which we

associate with the word. An infinite person may, of course, be possible, but is beyond our powers to conceive of. The expression appears to be the combination of two contradictory terms. Limitation, finiteness, is of the essence of personality as we understand it. The ego implies as its condition of existence the non-ego: the person implies an non-personal, or extra-personal, lying beyond the bounds of its circumference, and contra-distinguished from it. We are conditioned in our thought by the relativity of knowledge. Calvin's fault was that he systematized and affirmed where neither is possible.

There is much in Calvinism that is admirable, —philosophic insight, appreciation of the nature and magnitude of the problem, close analysis of human nature, and best of all, deep religious feeling. Had less been attempted more would have been achieved; but aiming at a rounded completeness, which was and is from the nature of the case impossible, and setting itself to explain both the how and the why of the divine procedure, undeterred by its own

denunciation in another case, of bold and curious inquiry into the secrets of God, it suffered the inevitable Nemesis of over-ambition. In its endeavour to explain all things, Calvinism stretched such truth as it had till it became tenuous; and when even with such treatment truth gave out, recourse was had to hypothesis, invention, and fable, so that in the end what truth there was came to be quite overweighted by what is manifestly not truth. Some of the conclusions reached might well have inspired doubt as to the validity of the process by which they had been arrived at; as, for instance, in the article of "The total depravity of human nature." Let anyone read the Article in the *Westminster Confession*, where it is affirmed that mankind is "utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil." Nor is this statement, so repugnant to reason and experience, an *obiter dictum* of Calvinism, so that it might be cut out of the general scheme without any injury to it; it is an integral part of the system, the logical

conclusion of its argument, and when it falls, reprobation falls with it, for total depravity is clearly the excuse for the *passing over*, as it is euphemistically called, of the non-elect; and with reprobation falls the whole scheme, fundamental in Calvinism, of the Divine decrees. The scheme owes such apparent scriptural authority as it has to the literal taking of what never was meant to be taken literally.

This Calvinism, the Scottish Church after having professed whole-heartedly for two centuries, and with some misgiving for nearly a century more, has now as good as disavowed. That the disavowal has not been explicit, but has been gone about in a round-about fashion, and, as it were, covertly, by so wording the formula of subscription that the declaration of adherence to it means as much, or as little, as the subscriber may choose to understand, has been found fault with in some quarters where it is thought that a bolder course should have been followed, and the *Confession* itself revised and refashioned, so as to bring it into conformity with modern religious convictions. It

cannot be too plainly stated that revision and refashioning are not possible. The document is a closely articulated whole: the conclusion flows logically from the premises. Even if it were possible, there are serious and indeed insuperable objections. Agreement would have been impossible of attainment, controversy and conflict would certainly have been provoked, with the probable result of secession and schism. Nor could any revision, supposing it to be practicable, be other than temporarily satisfactory. Thought is growing, and very soon the work of adjusting our creed to our faith would require to be undertaken again: whereas an elastic formula provides an automatic and continuous adjustment. We have not spoken of the statutory difficulty, to be taken account of by an Established Church, which might very well prove insuperable. And, after all, the business of the Church, its primary business at least, is not to formulate a theology, but to promote religion: and the two things are quite distinct, No doubt religion tends to precipitate (to use a chemical

term) a theology, but theology is never religion, and is not always religious. Not the creed but the emotions and sentiments, with which in the believer the creed comes to be associated, really count: the gifts and offerings of the devotee enrich and beautify the shrine.

Nevertheless, there is no reason why our theologians should not, but rather every reason why they should, set about the providing of the scientific theology of which so much is spoken and with which so little progress appears to be made. Such a theology must be scientific throughout, that is to say in respect of fundamentals, as well as of the developments from them: it must acknowledge the validity of the axiomata of the moral and spiritual consciousness which in their own sphere are as authoritative as the axioms of science are in their realm: and, finally, it must give due weight to the facts of observation and experence which, when generalized, have all the force of law.

And then, perhaps, when at last we have

got our house swept and garnished, and are in possession of a new theology, scientific from foundation to cope-stone, logically unassailable at every point, question-proof and intellectually satisfying, we may find that somehow in the process the Living Spirit has evaporated, so that the system, theoretically perfect, is destitute of power to achieve any spiritual result; and the scripture will be fulfilled again in our experience, for we shall know that *desiderium temporis acti* which Jesus foretold for His disciples: *Venient dies quando desideretis videre unum diem Filii hominis, et non videbitis.*[1]

Puritanism has also left its impress deeply upon the Scottish order of public worship. The Pauline dualism of flesh and spirit lies at the root of the Puritan philosophy, and as the term flesh includes under it all that ministers to sense, giving pleasure to the imagination or the taste, such things are to be entirely

[1] "A day of the Son of Man" may mean either a day such as men will have when He comes again in power, or, such as disciples had with Him in the past. The latter is the more natural interpretation.

excluded from the sanctuary, whatever concessions may require to be made to them in every-day life. The minister was austerely garbed in Genevan gown and bands. The churches were stripped of every ornament, and any approach to architectural pretension or even dignity was ruled out as inadmissible. The church of St. Giles in Edinburgh was divided into two by a partition: the arches were bricked up, and the columns and any carved stonework overlaid with plaster. The same treatment was meted out to the historic church of St. John in Perth. The buildings intended for public worship were made as mean and bare as possible. Even to-day the typical rural Parish Church is a plain square or slightly oblong building, barn-like in its structure, with a flat plastered ceiling, white-washed walls, and two tiers of square windows and galleries all round. There is, of course, no chancel: the pulpit occupies the place of honour; in front of it is the choir box, in the centre of which is the communion table, ordinarily used as the place for putting hymn books.

In the same way worship was made as bare as possible, so that at last it could hardly be said to survive at all. Reference has already been made to the disparaging name applied to the praise, prayer, and reading of scripture as "preliminary exercises"—preliminary, that is, to the main business of the sermon. At one period the use of the ascription after sermon was regarded as a sure mark of the prelatic beast; even the use of the Lord's Prayer was looked at askance as savouring of the same error. The stereotyped order came to be four singings, each consisting of sixteen lines of a metrical psalm or paraphrase,—hymns were forbidden as being of human origin; two prayers, homiletic rather than devotional or petitory, and of great length; and the reading of two short portions of scripture. The congregation sat while singing and stood during prayer. Now the order is reversed. Organs were not allowed, nor did the congregation take any part except in the singing. There were no responses and no Amens.

Though somewhat modified the traditional

order is preserved in substance. Some modifications and innovations have been introduced. Instrumental accompaniment is now the rule, although in the General Assembly the praise with which each session is opened is led by a precentor, the organ in the Assembly Hall being unused. In our cathedral churches a somewhat elaborate service is used; there is, however, no uniformity, each minister indulging his own predilections. There is a Church Service Society which devotes itself to the compilation and publication of orders of service, but as individual ministers are under no kind of obligation to consult anything beyond their own desires, there is nothing in the Scottish Church corresponding to what in England is understood by Common Prayer. A few adventurous spirits among ministers have introduced responses by the congregation or the repetition by the worshippers of the Creed and Lord's Prayer, but the results are far from encouraging. The Scottish people are averse from departing from the role of hearers of the Word.

The third bequest of Puritanism was a form of Church government. Presbyterianism was originally a protest against the hierarchical constitution of the Romish Church, but there was also the democratic and republican element underlying it. Bishops are condemned by Row and by early Assemblies as savouring of superiorities which ought not to be in the Church. That the system accords with the democratic sentiment of Scotland, and has also strengthened that sentiment, is not open to doubt. By the Settlement of 1690 the government of the Church is declared to be by assemblies, synods, presbyteries, and kirk sessions. All ministers are of equal standing, that is to say all parish ministers; ministers of chapels and mission churches are not admitted as members of the church courts. Presbyteries vary in size according to the populousness of the district within their bounds. Ministers and elders sit in them in equal numbers, and have the same voting powers. The moderator or chairman is appointed for a term of six months or one year, and the office is filled by

rotation, but only ministers are eligible for the position. This Court meets statedly, and has in theory and law large episcopal powers. It is charged with the supervision of all ministers and congregations within its bounds; it plants churches where required, and erects chapels into parish churches through the Court of Teinds, which is the Court of Session sitting for ecclesiastical business. Admirable in theory and serving well in practice, there is still unavoidably some of the disadvantage which must always attach to the discharge of governing functions by a committee or council. In large presbyteries the sense of individual responsibility is apt to be lost; in small presbyteries the close personal association of members of the court makes discipline difficult: and patronage is exercised without official responsibility. Changes which are not without significance have been introduced. The Moderator of the General Assembly is now *de facto* Moderator of the Church for the year, and is designated *Right Reverend*. Ex-Moderators are *Very Reverend*, and sitting

*in collegio* they decide who is to be Moderator for the coming year. Nevertheless in the Articles preparatory to re-union with the United Free Church, Presbyterianism appears to be indicated as the test by which the identity and continuity of the Church of Scotland are to be tried. The Church may change its heart but not its garments; its creed but not its form of government.

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Note.—Pantheism identifies God with the Universe. Theism and Deism agree in regarding God as distinct from His Creation; but from this point they part company. Theism stands for a God absolutely supreme; it is therefore optimistic not merely as regards the ultimate result but also as regards the process; for all things being in accordance with the Divine Will they are necessarily for the best. Somewhat illogically, human sin is excluded from the category of things which God has willed, and in this Theism appears to abandon its basic principle. The explanation (accepted by Flint) that sin is due to the wrong exercise of that "free-will" with which, as being necessary for a moral agent, God endowed man, is unsatisfactory, for it represents "free-will" as something absolute and unmotived. A sounder analysis would seem to be that "free-will" is the assertion of itself in action by the strongest motive; a good tree bringing forth good fruit and an evil tree bringing forth corrupt fruit.

Deism is the term generally assigned to the theory which regards God as standing outside of Creation, which is left to be

ruled by the laws ordained for its government. But Deism may fairly be taken as including also among its varieties the theory of a God working for the perfect consummation of His holy purpose, but hindered and limited by opposing forces and refractory material. Taking the term in this sense (as is done in the foregoing chapter) the Bible is as much Deistic as Theistic, both in the Old and New Testaments.

# CHAPTER VII

# EPILOGUE

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THE brief and imperfect survey attempted in the foregoing pages has shewn us a Church which, from its birth at the Reformation and for close on three centuries thereafter, was beset with troubles—and that some of these were of its own making did not lessen their urgency—but which, through all strugglings and perplexities, clung stedfastly to a two-fold faith, faith in the Christian religion as the one and only remedy for the world's ills, and faith in itself as the divinely commissioned minister of that remedy to mankind. By this faith the Church was saved, for to have it is the *esse* of a Church: to be without it is to be severed from the source of life and power, to be cut off as a branch and wither.

The purpose of Jesus in founding His Church is clearly set forth in the charge given

to the disciples as recorded in the closing verses of St. Matthew's Gospel: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them INTO the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

It is unfortunate that the Greek preposition εἰς is in our English Version rendered by *in* instead of *into*, for the mistranslation obscures the sense of the passage and has encouraged the growth of consequential errors. Jesus was not bidding the disciples to go abroad administering the rite of baptism with the recital of a baptismal formula. He was speaking of a baptism more profound and vital, and of a baptismal regeneration which should be a fact verifiable in experience. Go, He said, and plunge men and nations into the stream of influences which flows from the idea of God as the Father of mankind, and man's sonship in Christ, and the human consciousness of that filial relation, which the New Testament calls the witness of the Holy Ghost.[1]

[1] Rom. viii. 15, 16; Gal. iv. 6; St. John xx. 21, 22.

And when we turn to the gospel narrative to discover what it really was that Jesus Himself "began both to do and teach," we find that it was nothing other than this same thing which He here enjoins upon His disciples. In His aim there was nothing new. What He aimed at was just what the wise and good in all ages of the world have set before them as their aim, namely, the bringing of human life and conduct into harmony with that law of God or goodness or conscience which all men more or less clearly discern, and of which Bishop Butler finely says, that if it had power as it has manifest authority, it would rule the world. But while the aim was old, the method of seeking it was new. Jesus sought the old objective by a new road, and, so approached, the objective took on a new appearance, and became practically a new thing. He took that rugged old law of Sinai, a string of negations, prohibition fortified by threats, and working out, as mere prohibition always tends to do, in two ways, cowing the weak into submission but provoking the strong

to revolt and resistance—Jesus took this law and baptized it into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and from that baptism the commandment emerged transfigured: it became the law of love. No longer was it a voice of terror, blackness and darkness and tempest and the sound of a trumpet, causing those who heard exceedingly to fear and quake; it was the Father's voice calling to His children to come to Him, appealing to those divine instincts and affections which He, their Father, had begotten in them. Jesus made duty a filial word. This was the good news of the kingdom which He published; and the common people heard Him gladly. Not that they understood the full scope of the message, but they recognised and appreciated the change of tone, the new manner of presentment, so different from that to which they were accustomed. Here was one who spoke with authority, and not as the Scribes who were mere vendors of second-hand opinions, but out of the fulness of His own heart appealed to something in their

hearts which responded to the message and confirmed its truth.

In this teaching of Jesus we find two elements, closely related but quite distinct, one affirming the necessity of an inward change,[2] and the other declaring the instrument which, and which alone, can produce this change to be the revelation of the Father.[3]

Jesus was above all things else an interiorist. The distinction which we make between desire which has become overt in action and desire which gets no further than desire, has no place in His scale of moral values. A movement of hatred in the heart, Jesus counted the same as murder; a movement of unchaste desire the same as adultery.

To say that He attached no value to correct conduct which proceeded from any other motive than love of virtue is to understate the fact: such conduct Jesus branded as iniquity. It is this insistence of His upon *naturalness*, upon men being themselves in speech and deed, which explains what the religious people

[2] St. Matthew xviii. 3; St. John iii. 3. [3] St. John xvii. 3.

of that day found so perplexing and scandalising—the partiality of Jesus for the society of people who according to the accepted standard were not respectable; so that He appeared to them a lover of feasts and wine and loose company. In that society He found naturalness; these people were without the affectation of virtues which they did not possess: they were honest. In the Pharisees this correspondence between the inward nature and the outward conduct was wanting: their goodness was only apparent, a piece of acting, and proceeding from no living root in the soul, it was a lie, and as such hateful.

But the Christian scheme does not stop here; the demand for naturalness is not a plea for that return to nature which means moral anarchy: it is only preliminary to this other requirement—that the inward nature shall be so changed and purified, that when it utters itself in action, that action shall be good. It is a large demand, belonging to the realm which we faintly praise as the ideal in order to distinguish it from the real. Yet if there be

one thing more clear than another in the New Testament it is that Jesus believed this mighty inward change, which the Bible calls *salvation*, to be possible for man. "Be ye perfect," He said to the disciples, "even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The disciples shared their Master's belief: the substantial instalment of salvation of which they were conscious[4] in their own experience forbade them to doubt the possibility of its completion in them; they had the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts,[5] giving them assurance of their final triumph over sin.

The instrument by which this change is to be brought about, Jesus declares to be the "revelation of the Father," that is to say, the development in man of the filial sense towards God. For the consciousness of sonship is equivalent to, and is but another name for, affection, trust, fellowship. Thus Jesus appealed to the generous instincts of the human heart, and the appeal was not in vain: hearts

[4] St. John i. 12.

[5] II Cor. i. 22; Eph. I. 13, 14.

were softened and purified by the thought of God as Father. The argument prevailed not merely from its philosophical and psychological truth, but because it was reinforced and confirmed by what men saw in Jesus Himself. He exhibited that community of nature with God, which He urged men to seek: those who really knew Him felt that in seeing Him they saw the Father. This was the truth which Paul expressed when he wrote that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.[6] Paul spoke from his own experience: we may take it for granted that there had been a mental process going on within him which led up to his conversion, but what it was we do not know, and perhaps Paul himself could not have told us. Christ's presentation of the truth seemed to burst on Paul suddenly as a tropical sunrise[7] bursts without any warning

[6] II Cor. v. 19. *Not imputing their trespasses unto them: i.e.*, not counting the sin into which men fall as something inherent in human nature, any more than the dust which the wind has blown into a man's eyes, is part of his eyes.

[7] Kipling's description is a picture:—
"And the sun comes up like thunder outer China 'cross the bay."

dawn on an astonished world; he was amazed by the splendour of the inward vision, so that he was blinded for the moment, and had to be led by his companions. How profound Paul felt the change in him to be his writings sufficiently attest. It was certainly not what we generally mean by *conversion*, which is the term we apply to the change from wickedness to uprightness. Paul never had been consciously wicked; righteousness as he understood it had been his constant pursuit. But he saw now how completely he had misunderstood what righteousness is.

The change he experienced was a change of conscious relation. He had been a slave obeying a pragmatic sanction, an imperial ukase, a commandment external to himself: now he realised that he was a son, partaker by inheritance[8] of the divine, so that he had only to give his own better nature free play; since to be truly himself was to be truly God's. Love is the fulfilling of the law. The true son does not require written instructions as to

[8] Romans viii. 17: "Heirs of God; joint heirs with Christ."

how he shall comport himself towards his father; his filial affection tells him, and makes filial duty a delight. It was in this experience that Paul found his doctrine of the *necrosis*—dying to live again. The life which he had lived as Saul was like a former state of being. He had died; Paul was Saul risen from the dead and walking in newness of life. Old things had passed away, all things were become new: he was a new creature in Christ Jesus; he no longer lived, but Christ lived in him. We said a little while ago that there is no means of knowing how Paul's conversion was led up to; and there is none. It may well have been by some word of Christ's being reported to him by a casual hearer—some saying like the imperishable one: *My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.* We can understand how such a saying would haunt Paul, "creating whole volumes" in him, and filling him with wondering envy. Here was he labouring to do God's will, putting constraint upon himself, forcing himself into what he judged to be the proper path, kicking

against the pricks, resisting the misgivings and compunctions which visited him: and there was one who spoke of the doing of God's will as the discharge of a natural function, the satisfying of an appetite, an instinct. And that which rationalises this saying of Jesus is the word *Father*. The whole of the gospel is in that saying of Christ's, the gospel in its power and promise. Paul felt he owed the change wrought in him to Jesus, and that debt he never forgot; from every page he wrote thereafter his boundless gratitude shines forth in a phrase which with Paul was no mere formula but the literal statement of a fact, the phrase: *Through Jesus Christ our Lord.* All that Paul was that was worth being, all that he had or hoped for that was worth having or hoping for, he felt he owed to Him who had shewed him the Father and the Son, and by opening his heart to receive the Holy Ghost had made him to sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

If, then, we take as the gospel that, and that only, which we find embodied in the

teaching of Jesus, it would appear that it is something quite simple and plain, which also claims to be verifiably true. What Jesus variously called the gospel, the kingdom of God, salvation, eternal life, is neither more nor less than the filial sense in man which, knowing God as Father, redeems the nature and brings it into harmony with God.

* * * * *

We are witnessing in our day a widespread indifference to, and even definite rejection of, the Christian faith, and for this the Church must accept some responsibility. Hardly had Jesus passed from earth when there began a process of elaboration and embellishment of the gospel. On the one hand there was developed a theory of sacramental values, which at the last came perilously near to necromancy; while, on the other hand, those with whom thought counted for more than feeling, built up a theological system which, whatever its merits, has no obvious relation to the direct teaching of Jesus, and which cannot

be said to make any appeal to that verifying faculty to which Jesus[9] and His immediate followers[10] so confidently addressed themselves. No doubt, in doing what it did, the Church was actuated by the best intentions. It wished to magnify Jesus, to set forth the picture of Him more impressively by providing for it a worthy frame, but the result was that the frame came to be considered the principal thing; it encroached upon the picture and obscured it. The teaching of Jesus is plain and simple; it claims also, as has been said, to be verifiable; but obviously the same cannot be affirmed of that complicated scheme of doctrine largely compounded of metaphysical and juridical notions which both the mediæval and reformed Churches have sealed with their authority: for this system is declared to be "the Catholic faith, which, except a man receive in its entirety, he cannot be saved, but shall without doubt perish everlastingly."[11]

[9] St. John xvii. 25. [10] II Cor. iv. 2, 3.

[11] In the "Quicumque vult," or so-called Athanasian creed, Calvin is hardly more accommodating.

Those unable to accept this mass of dogma were formerly unchurched as unbelievers; now they unchurch themselves in ever-increasing numbers; and to those thus defaulting from faith, but still retaining their idealism, Socialism extends a welcome and offers a home; to the uncritical among them it even promises "practical" Christianity. Hence it is that while Socialism has officially discarded Christianity and denounces it as the chief enemy to progress, there are still to be found those who call themselves Christian Socialists, as though the two terms of the expression were not only reconcilable but capable of being combined. They may be trusted to discover their mistake. No man can serve two masters. Socialism has been called a religion, but as a matter of fact the two conflict at every point. In religion the individual is the unit, and an end in himself[12]: Socialism, as the name implies, makes the community both unit and end. From this basic contradiction the process of divergence flows and

[12] James v. 20; St. Matt. xvi. 26; xviii. 6.

extends. Where the paramount consideration is the smooth working of the social machine, conduct is what matters, and virtue is externalised; instead of the kingdom of God within a man, producing as its *fruits*[13] the works of love, joy, peace, in "the manifestation of the sons of God," we have the conception of an earthly paradise consisting in public order and material well-being: and as conduct can be controlled and directed by the application of external force, legislation with its penal machinery is relied upon to bring about the desired state of affairs.

This Socialistic ethical idea has powerfully influenced many who reject and condemn the Socialist economics, as we shall better understand from actual examples.

There are two sins which at the present time deeply exercise the public mind and conscience, namely, sexualism and intemperance, and a moment's consideration will show

[13] The use of the word fruits, both by Jesus and in the Epistles, is instructive. Fruit is the product of the tree according to its nature—"after its kind": the good works of the Pharisees were like the imitation fruit we hang on a Christmas tree.

that in respect of both it is not the sin but its consequences, and especially its social consequences, which are matter of concern. With regard to impurity, how little is said as to the havoc[14] wrought by it in the soul of the sensualist; the stress is laid upon the disease, the communicable disease, which results from one form of indulgence; and the remedy is sought, not in the cleansing of the soul but in compulsory notification of disease, compulsory treatment of it, and what is called prophylaxis. We have only to set side by side with all this the Christian appeal: *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in you*,[15] to become conscious of the difference of level and of atmosphere. It is one thing to save from sin, and another to make sin safe.

Similarly with regard to intemperance: here the current arguments employed are based on

[14] James iii. 15. "Earthly, sensual, devilish" is the inevitable transition. Man may sink to beasthood, but he cannot remain there: he sinks to deeper depths.

[15] I Cor. vi. 19.

the monetary expense, and the injury to health and industrial efficiency, while the remedy proposed is that of legislative prohibition of the sale, consumption or manufacture of alcoholic beverages.

Again, let us compare with this the Christian appeal: *They that be drunken are drunken in the night: but let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breast-plate of faith and love, and for an helmet the hope of salvation.*[16]

That the Christian method is also the more effective is probable.[17] As it is, what we may see is the repetition of an historic scene—the unclean spirits refusing to be cast out, and replying to the well-meaning exorcists, "Jesus we know and Paul we know, but who are ye?"

With this order of ideas so prevalent in the world it was hardly to be expected that the Church should escape contagion: and it has not escaped it: invited and adjured by professed

[16] I Thess. v. 7-8.

[17] Matthew Arnold was far removed from a crude evangelicalism, yet he could say that Moody and Sankey had a far more profound and truer philosophy of the human spirit than Liberal reformers of the Morley School.

friends among the politicians, in the press, and even in its own courts, to come down from visionary heights, and, ceasing from the vain endeavour to create saints, be content to manufacture respectability, the Church has made concessions to the clamour.

New departments have been set up charged with the promotion of special reforms, and there has been called into being a host of congregational agencies, culminating in the "institutional" Church, where from Monday to Saturday there is a weekly round of mild convivialities. What our Puritan fathers would think were they to return and see the tree of the Lord's planting which they pruned so severely, bearing this fruit, may perhaps be imagined. It is not denied that by those methods good may be achieved, but there remains the question: At what price? Church Temperance Committees, with a programme of extremism endorsed by the Church, must tend to alienate many good Christian people who do not recognise the *jus divinum* of total abstinence, and resent its inculcation as an

interference with their Christian liberty. We have no right to make acceptance of the gospel more difficult by our own additions. We know how strenuously Paul resisted those who would have grafted Judaic and Essenic traditions on the gospel of Christ. He poured contempt upon the ordinances "Touch not, taste not, handle not." He rebuked those who suffered themselves to be "dogmatized."[18] What does not this rebuke imply as concerning dogmatizers?[19]

There is another and graver danger. All this business of reform and recreation tends to distract the Church from its true work, tends to cloud the vision of its high and holy calling: cumbered with much serving, troubled and anxious about many things, there is danger that it may neglect the one thing needful.

"The Church is moribund." So said a friend to the writer not long ago in conversa-

[18] Coloss. ii. 20, 23, Τί δογματίζεσθε Yet those ordinances are sometimes quoted as though they had the Apostle's authority. *Cf.* Gal. v. 1.

[19] St. Matthew xxiii. 4; Gal. v. 12, 13.

tion about these matters; they are sad words, and they recall the sad words of John Henry Newman to the Church of his early love and upbringing: "O my Mother! Who hath put this note upon thee, to have a miscarrying womb and dry breasts, to be strange to thine own flesh and thine eye cruel to thy little ones?" There is no mistaking the poignancy of the grief which wrung the reproach from him. Newman sought the satisfaction of his yearnings in a Church which is a strange compound of truth and falsehood, of faith and feigning; a Church which on the one hand can nourish the loftiest idealism in her devotees, and on the other fosters superstition and blesses ignorance; a Church which is indeed all things to all men, and produces with equal facility amazing contrasts—a St. Francis and the Molly Maguires. Whether the satisfaction which Newman undoubtedly did find was perfect or was marred by the conscious repression in himself of things he could not condemn, is one of those things which will not be known until the secrets of all hearts are revealed.

A miscarrying womb and dry breasts! It is a heavy indictment, for it would mean, if it were true, the total recreancy of the Church. The Church is chosen to be the spouse of Christ that she may bring many sons and daughters unto God, and nourish her little ones at her breast till they all come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Not one jot of that ideal may the Church abate. Moribund! Barren! May we not rather hope and believe that the Church is not less full of life, not less divine than it was in its first beginnings, when as yet it was but embryonic, potential in a little band of simple men who believed in Jesus Christ and in the truth which He had taught, and who, because they believed, rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Beautiful upon the mountains were their feet, shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, the feet of men who brought good tidings and published salvation.

To preach this gospel of peace to them that

are afar off and to them that are nigh, to translate men out of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, so that they, too, may be the sons of God, without rebuke, shining as lights in the world, this is the mission of the Church, and not merely to cleanse the outside of the cup, by making men sober, saving, outwardly respectable, and doing this by whatever godless means may seem likely to answer. This Christian ideal the Church need not abate. There is an idealism which is but dreaming, the painting of pictures on the empty air, the baseless fabric of a vision to which no reality anywhere corresponds.

The Christian ideals are of another kind, they have behind them the eternal reality of the God who is our Father. They may seem vain to the world; to the wise in their own conceits they may be foolishness, and to those whose idea of righteousness does not exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees, a stumbling-block in the path of progress and a positive hindrance to "practical reform." But to them

that believe, the Christian ideal is still as it was so long ago, the power of God and the wisdom of God; not a dream but a heavenly vision, to which to be disobedient is to be unfaithful; it is a glimpse of that to which we may yet attain, if not here then hereafter, when the kingdoms of this world shall have become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. It was this vision, this faith, this lively hope unto which they had been begotten again, which made the disciples what they were, and enabled them to do all the wonders which they did. It enraptured their souls; for they all, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, were changed into the same image, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. "This is the voice which we hear in the gospel inviting us to love, joy, peace in the presence of God, unlike that other barren voice with which we communed for a while in a passing mood. The ecstasy of the apostle may seem to us a dream only: it may seem also to be the truest of all things. But whether we are able altogether to receive

the words of the gospel or not, we may find something in them applicable to our own lives which may help to raise us out of the world in which we mostly live into that of which Christ speaks to us." [20]

[20] Benjamin Jowett: Sermon: "The Joys of Youth."

THE END.

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